

The Political and Economic Effect of the American Response to 9/11 on Israel

James Valadez

A thesis

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the

Requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts in International Studies

University of Washington

2021

Committee:

Mark C. Long

Niko Switek

Program Authorized to Offer Degree:

Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies

©Copyright 2021

James Valadez

University of Washington

Abstract

Israel: The Political and Economic Effect of American Response to 9/11

James Robert Valadez

Chair of Supervisory Committee:

Mark C. Long

Daniel J. Evans School of Public Policy & Governance

The impact of 9/11 was significant to global politics because of the United States' response to the attack and subsequent wars in the Middle East. As a state with a "special relationship" with the United States, Israel was positioned to be uniquely affected by the change in the US' behavior in the region. The goal of this thesis was to look for changes that occurred after 2001 in the political and economic spheres of Israel compared to the twenty years prior to 2001. The restriction to 1980 was made to insulate the study from the rapid growth that occurs after the foundation of a new state. Some of the results were that the office of the president moved from left wing control to right wing, the number of political parties represented in the legislature decreased, and the economy continued to steadily grow despite the upheaval in the region. US-Israeli relations were also more strained in the post-2001 era than before due to criticism of Israeli aggression.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This project would not have been possible without the help and support of the following individuals. Each of whom have my deepest and more sincere gratitude.

Dr. Mark Long for making the field of statistics both highly enjoyable and easily understandable. You have trained countless students to be able to be effective statisticians who can make a difference with their careers.

Dr. Niko Switek for introducing me to the concept of studying political parties beyond their candidates. Your passion for teaching and research were always present and your help during this project was invaluable.

Dr. Deborah Porter for being a supportive and constructive mentor. Your ability to guide students to find their own ideas for research is truly incredible.

Drs. Benjamin Meiches and Charles Williams for helping me to find my footing at UW Tacoma. You both encourage students to do their best work and hold them to a high standard you know they can achieve.

To all my friends and family who have been constant sources of support and motivation.

Special thanks to my kids, Grayson and Laurana, who bring levity to my life with their humor and love.

Above all, my wife Sierra who always believed I was capable of graduate school and writing this thesis throughout the late nights and long days of classes and writing. I absolutely could not have done this without you.

I. INTRODUCTION

From an economic and security standpoint, 9/11 was a significant day to the world. Its significance on American foreign policy and, subsequently, world politics cannot be underestimated. The shift in American foreign policy from protective military action to preventative action had great implications for the Middle East. One need look no further than the wars in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Syria as examples of the proactive nature of its conflicts. However, 9/11 had a significant effect on Israel as well. Due to Israel's special relationship with the United States, its tumultuous relationship with Middle East countries, and its place at the crossroads of Europe, Asia, and Africa, Israel was positioned to be caught up in the American response to 9/11 and its subsequent wars. In this thesis, I argue that the US response to 9/11 rendered Israel more aggressive militarily and right-leaning politically than it would have otherwise become. The US response also aided Israel's economic growth through interlinkages between the technology sectors of the two economies.

On its own, it is unlikely that Israel would have been directly affected by 9/11 for two reasons. The first is that jihadi attacks were focused on the United States during this time. According to Glen Robinson in his book *Global Jihad*, Usama Bin Laden believed that weakening and/or destroying the United States was paramount. The reasoning was that while other states, (such as Israel), were seen as a problem to the Muslim world that needed to be removed, it was the US and its backing that allowed them to exist.¹ Thus the US was the central problem that needed to be dealt with at this time. The second reason Israel would not likely have been directly affected by 9/11 was that Israel's armed forces were – and have historically been – strong. The small state defeated its neighbors in combat with decisive victories in the Six-Day

¹ Robinson, p. 79.

War, the Yom Kippur War, and from various surgical strikes such as the bombing of Iraq's nuclear reactor in the 1980s.

Thus, the United States' response to 9/11 was the critical variable at play that affected Israel and its economic and political systems. The US government declared war on Afghanistan within four weeks of 9/11.² The US then invaded Iraq in early 2003 in a protracted war effort.³ Later on, the US would again commit to war in the Middle East with its declaration of war on ISIL/ISIS, this time pulling the state into Syria.⁴ In the case of the United States, war has been a constant presence in the country's history.⁵ What makes the past twenty years of war different was the shift in US foreign policy from protective to proactive. George W. Bush, the president at the time of 9/11, established the goals of the War on Terror in a speech he delivered in 2003: taking the fight to the terrorists, using American influence to attack terror networks, and to isolate these groups, among other things.⁶

As a result, American foreign policy when it came to armed conflict was more aggressive and/or preventative in nature than it was prior. The shift in policy can be seen when compared to the previous decade's Gulf War, when the US became involved due to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.⁷ However, with a new paradigm in place, the US did not need a pretense to go to war if it identified a credible threat to itself, the presence of terrorist activity, or a threat to another state.

Israel was affected by this change because it occupies a special place in both the Middle East and in US policy. In the Middle East, Israel is the only majority non-Muslim country in the region. While it has Muslim and Arabic citizens, the bulk of its population is Jewish (~74%) and

² Torreón, p. 6 – 7.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 8 – 9.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

⁵ <https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/595752-the-us-has-been-at-war-225-out-of-243-years-since-1776>

⁶ <https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/02/20030214-7.html>

⁷ <https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/iraq-invades-kuwait>

the main religion is Judaism (~86%).⁸ As a result, Israel is surrounded by states that are vastly different in terms of ethnicity and religion. The differences between Israel and its neighbors are also clear when viewing the number of armed conflicts in which Israel has been involved – Israel having many more to its name.⁹ With regards to Israel’s special relationship with the US, Israel has been the recipient of large amounts of aid in terms of cash, military weaponry, and economic bolstering through joint ventures in the technology sector.¹⁰ Israel is also an important foothold for the US military presence in the region due to US armed forces being able to be stationed there with no worry of domestic attack.¹¹

With the US changing its foreign policy, Israel was swept up in this change because the US became more aggressive and began spending more money on military equipment. Israel benefitted from the increased spending as American companies began working with or purchasing Israeli companies with novel solutions in the technology sector. Also, the aggressiveness of the US allowed Israel to be more aggressive as the increased military presence in the region served to bolster Israeli forces and suppress Arabic ones. Lastly, the economic and militaristic influence would also influence Israeli politics as the government sought to gain as much benefit as possible from the US-Israel relationship.

This paper focuses on Israel’s development during two blocks of time: 1981 to 2001 and 2001 to 2021. These two phases were selected for multiple reasons. The first is that since Israel is a young state, for accuracy’s sake it seems necessary to exclude the first few decades following its foundation. This exclusion attempts to minimize the misleading picture that could

⁸ <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/latest-population-statistics-for-israel>

⁹ <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/israel-s-wars-and-operations>

¹⁰ <https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbestechcouncil/2020/07/03/an-oasis-of-mobility-innovation-the-origins-of-israels-silicon-wadi/?sh=556f9b6c23a0>

¹¹ <https://www.businessinsider.com/us-israel-allies-2017-2>

be painted by including the rapid changes that occur when a state is being established, hopefully beginning analysis with a stabilized, mature state. The next reason is that both of these phases include many instances of armed conflict, which allows for the examination between the severity and the form of the conflict, e.g., war between states or war against a terrorist group. Lastly, each block of time encompasses two decades, which allows for trends to be found and/or monitored. By comparing trends in areas such as economic growth or national political shifts, the effect of 9/11 on these areas can be better isolated.

These two phases will be compared through many metrics. The first set of metrics revolve around GDP. This metric set is important because the technology sector in Israel was substantial before 9/11 and has rapidly grown as Israel is now a leading authority in security technologies. Changes in GDP serve as a proxy for economic health between the two phases, with high levels of growth traditionally indicating a healthy economy. Further, GDP changes will be contextualized against global and Arab World GDP changes as well. The use of GDP per capita accomplishes a similar task by monitoring the average earnings of Israeli citizens, looking for trends in either direction. Finally, foreign aid is used to determine how much of an impact that external money had on the Israeli economy and whether Israel's dependence upon it has changed since 9/11.

The second set of metrics are dedicated to the changes in Israel's political sphere at large. While there was a significant shift to the right that occurred just prior to the first phase in 1977, this paper is interested in looking at shifts in political alignment in each phase beginning in 1981 as well as relative to each other. Since Israel has been involved in many armed conflicts, there have been many opportunities for political parties to change their political alignment, moving either left or right on the political spectrum, as well as incorporating different elements into their

manifestos. By tracking movements in party shifts as well as keywords in manifestos, it will allow for comparison between the two phases.

The third set of metrics is similar to the second but focuses on the main political actors in the Israeli government: the Knesset (legislature), the Supreme Court, the president, and the prime minister. Rather than monitoring the political sphere at large, the intent is to monitor state level shifts – possible because of each actor’s role in the government. Since the prime minister is the head of the government, their decisions can have impacts on the direction the economy takes as well as international diplomacy. The Knesset’s role as the legislative authority has implications for all Israeli life and can thus help or hurt the economy. Lastly, the Supreme Court and its relationship with the other two branches of government is important because it can hinder progress if it disagrees with actions from either one.

The final set of metrics regards international affairs – the relationship Israel has with its neighbors, the United States, and other selected groups. This metric is important because these relationships affect economic areas. Changes in these relationships are also significant because the building or degradation of international relationships has a large impact on Israel and its decisions. Finally, the monitoring of armed conflict sheds light on the politics of the Middle Eastern region and can correlate to economic booms or dips.

I. Before Israel, the Yishuv

It would not be fruitful to discuss the economy, politics, and international relations of Israel without first discussing the foundation of the state for reference, even if it will not be included in the metrics. This is relevant when it comes to later discussion regarding wars and trade between Israel and the Palestinians and other states. It should also be noted that while the

focus of the paper is from 1981 to the present day, the history of Israel has effects that have lasted to the present day.

While the state of Israel was founded in 1948, it did not come from nothing. In the early 1900s, there was already a sizable Jewish population living in the area that is now Tel Aviv.¹² This grouping was called the Yishuv. The existence of the Yishuv laid the foundations both for what Israel would become and for future conflicts with the Arabs in Palestine and other states. While Israel is the formally recognized state, many of its future institutions were formed within the Yishuv. In particular, the Knesset was formed in the Yishuv and was “a body encompassing all the Jews of Palestine except for those who did not wish to belong.”¹³

Even in the Yishuv, Knesset members were chosen through elections. The Knesset provided a sense of autonomy and structure to what would otherwise be considered a tribe of people in a foreign nation. This gave the Knesset a strong sense of legitimacy that would have been lacking if voting were not introduced until the creation of Israel. A large part of legitimacy is the people’s trust in a system – trust that is built over time. Since voting was present in the Yishuv, it allowed Israel to draw upon that built-up legitimacy to conduct national elections that had a higher level of trust than if Israel’s had been the first vote.

Much like all political bodies, the Knesset and the Yishuv were not without their problems, and these problems would continue into Israel. An internal issue that can be seen in Israel today is the difficulties that the ultra-Orthodox pose. Due to their religious views, which are the strictest of the Jews in terms of their following the Torah and its teachings, the ultra-Orthodox “were reluctant to participate in a body whose election process included women.”¹⁴

¹² Shapira, 67.

¹³ Shapira, 120.

¹⁴ Ibid.

This issue caused the ultra-Orthodox to threaten to leave the Knesset, which would threaten the Knesset's legitimacy and power because it would no longer represent all Jews in the Yishuv. The small ultra-Orthodox population was able to wield an outsized amount of power as a result. As will be seen later, the threat to leave the Knesset set a precedent wherein the ultra-Orthodox still have an inordinate amount of political power in modern Israel. This power has affected the economics of the state and political life.

Territorially, the Yishuv was the beginning of Jewish occupation of Palestinian land. While it was the UN that allowed Israel to be created, there were many Jews living in Palestine for decades prior. The presence of the Jews was not a large problem because the Jewish population was small both in relative terms to the Arab population, and small in absolute terms with there being fewer than thirty thousand Jews.¹⁵ The relative size of the Jewish people compared to the Arab populace did not hold true as the Yishuv grew in size and scope. The closer to the foundation of Israel it came, the more difficulties there were between the Arabs and the Jews.¹⁶ More land was being occupied and more religious tensions began rising to the surface on the borders between the groups. These hostilities would continue both after the creation of Israel and in the decades afterwards.

II. Foundation of Israel

Israel was formed under difficult circumstances. The UN's vote and decision to partition Palestine in 1947 for the creation of Israel enraged the Arabs both in Palestine and the surrounding states. The UN's legal authority was questionable as to its ability to implement a

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Shapira, 155 – 158.

partition. As a result, “Palestine resorted to self-reliance in the form of violence.”¹⁷ The UN and the global community were hesitant to directly enforce the voted upon partition.¹⁸ The vote and corresponding hesitation indicated that those in power wanted the Jews to have land of their own but did not want to be the ones directly responsible. This could have been for multiple reasons, but one of the biggest is that the world was only two years removed from the end of World War II. Besides the United States, many of the other great powers were still rebuilding their armies and states.

This state of affairs meant that during the foundation of the state, Israel and the Jews were not going to receive much external aid. However, as discussed, there was already a significant Jewish presence in the area in the form of the Yishuv. The Jewish forces were able to successfully wage war against the Palestinian forces because they “were comprised mainly of the Jewish defense force, Haganah, along with the LEHI and Irgun terrorist groups.”¹⁹ Jewish forces were more disciplined and better trained than Palestinian forces. During the first few months of the war, the Arab forces were on the offensive, with Arabs attacking convoys and villages; Haganah forces went on the offensive about a month before the establishment of Israel.²⁰

The result of the war was that Israel was established despite Arab resistance. While the global community maintained a largely hands-off role, it did witness the violence. Both Arab and Jewish forces were guilty of terrible crimes. Both sides massacred villages and killed noncombatants in a display of force. Hundreds of thousands of Arabs were displaced from their homes as the newly formed state of Israel evicted them from their lands. Due to the war,

¹⁷ Harms, 93.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Harms, 94.

“approximately 700,000 Palestinians fled or were forced from their homes.”²¹ These actions furthered the distrust between Arabs and Jews and laid the foundation for future problems.

It also instilled the idea of active defense in the Israeli psyche. As would be seen later in the second Arab Israeli war, conflicts in the 1990s, and terrorist conflicts in the 2000s, Israel has generally been proactive regarding threat removal. This behavior was evidenced when bombing Egyptian and Iranian air strips during early wars and the desire to preemptively bomb Iraq’s nuclear power plant in 1981. Whether this is due to the violence surrounding its foundation or generational trauma from the Holocaust and living in the diaspora, that is outside the scope of this review. It is notable that many of those in the highest government positions of power are former veterans that served in armed conflicts for other states (most often a European state because they were born before Israel existed) or held high rank in the Israeli army.

III. Early Troubles

An early trouble that Israel faced was the absorption of Jews emigrating from Europe (and the United States, to a lesser extent) to Israel. This immigration was problematic, ironically, *because* Israel was established as the new homeland of the Jewish people.²² The difficulty regarding absorption posed a similar problem to what the Yishuv faced when the ultra-Orthodox Jews threatened to leave the Knesset – if Israel could not accommodate the Jews wanting to emigrate, then its self-appointed title as the new homeland would immediately be threatened. As such, Israel did not bar any Jew that wished to emigrate to Israel. However, this decision was not unanimously supported by all the upper echelons of the government.

²¹ Harms, 99.

²² Shapira, 224 – 225.

The most apparent problem that came to light was that Israel simply did not have the structures in place to accommodate the rapid expansion in population. There was a large disparity between the amount of housing available and the number of people.²³ One of the solutions to this problem was the creation of ghettos in which to house the new immigrants. The conditions in the ghettos were, by-and-large, poor: dozens of people having to share one bathroom, an entire family being forced to share one room, and the quality of the housing being generally substandard.²⁴

Once some time had passed, it was proposed that newly arriving Jews move into and take over displaced Arab homes. The homes were already built and were on what was now considered Israeli land, according to the new borders between Israel and Palestine.²⁵ While this was an efficient way to find housing for new immigrants, it did not help Jewish-Arab relations as the displaced Arabs lost their homes and whatever possessions remained inside. It also did not wholly solve the problem of immigration overrunning the capabilities of the new state. It simply bought time for the government to find a workable solution to the high rate of immigration that was happening.

A small wrinkle that was present at the time, (and still is today), is that while Israel is the homeland of the Jews, much of the Jewish people lived in the diaspora.²⁶ It is difficult to hold the title of “homeland” when other countries have millions of Jews as well. For instance, as of the most recent census in 2020, the United States has a Jewish population of 7.6 million compared to 9.05 million Jews in Israel.²⁷ These numbers are not hugely different from one another. While

²³ Shapira, 226 – 227.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid

²⁶ DellaPergola, 367.

²⁷ American Jewish Population Project

the population is declining, there are also still millions of Jews scattered across Europe.²⁸ This does not invalidate Israel, but it puts it in the politically uncomfortable position of not being able to be the voice of the majority of the world's Jewish people.

In addition to the internal troubles Israel faced, external troubles increased as well. The large influx of Jews to the region caused further deterioration of relations between Israel and the local Arabs. The increase of the Jewish population meant a decrease in the monopoly of the Arab populace as more homes and land were being purchased by Jews. In certain areas this caused Arabs to become the minority on lands that they had lived on for generations.²⁹

While Palestine was divided up according to the UN declaration, Israel's borders expanded roughly a year later after neighboring Arab states attacked and were rebuffed by Israeli forces. Israel was able to push much closer to the Jordan border and were able to control almost all the land on the Egyptian border. This expansion meant a further increase in the number of Palestinian refugees and more loss of capital in the form of homes and possessions.

II. ECONOMIC METRICS

In this analysis, the economic effects of 9/11 are of great interest because gains in different sectors can indicate changes in a state's economic strengths or movement toward industrialization. The economic variables that will be used are GDP, GDP per capita, and life expectancy. GDP was chosen because it is the simplest way to measure the size of an economy and allows for measures to be taken regarding its growth. GDP per capita allows for a similar analysis as GDP but yields information regarding the average purchasing power of individuals. Life expectancy also serves as a proxy for the development of a state's support structures. This is

²⁸ Lipka

²⁹ Mahler, 41.

an attempt to capture harder to define variables such as level of health care, quality of life, and others.

For a large part of this analysis, the data used was taken from the World Bank website regarding Israel and other states' GDP as well as the other variables selected. The choice to use World Bank data was to try and minimize potential errors that may come from different methods of reporting by country. Additionally, the World Bank has their data in the same unit (current US\$), removing the possibility of conversion at different exchange rates or the mixture of current and constant US\$.

I. GDP

Israel's economic growth between 1981 and 2001 and 2001 and 2020 is markedly different.³⁰ In both periods, the economic growth is roughly linear in nature. When these values are fitted in a linear regression model, the R^2 for the 1981 to 2001 and 2001 to 2019 time frames are 0.9663 and 0.9748, respectively. These results show that a linear regression is a strong fit for the data. Further, while the intercepts for each data set are naturally different, the regression coefficients for the variable "year" are largely different.

However, the regression coefficient is different from the observed annual growth rates. The observed annual growth rates show that prior to 2001, the Israeli economy grew by 4.53% from one year to the next. Post 2001, the annual growth rate slowed by over a percentage point to 3.25%. A further example of the change between the two timeframes is that the minimum growth rate before 2001 was 0.12% compared to -0.01% afterward; the maximum growth rate was 7.76% and 5.77%, respectively. It should be noted that this downshift is not wholly unsurprising

³⁰ Economic data was taken from the World Bank

though as the 1990s were a time of great economic growth as states experienced the technology boom that this decade ushered in.

Annual growth rates, while important, are better understood in a wider context. I want to explore how Israel’s economy grew compared to the world, the United States, the EU, and Arab nations. These comparisons will help to give a better picture of how Israel has weathered global events, and the relative effect on economic output. Events such as the global recession of 2008 will show how ably the Israeli economy can to respond to difficulties.

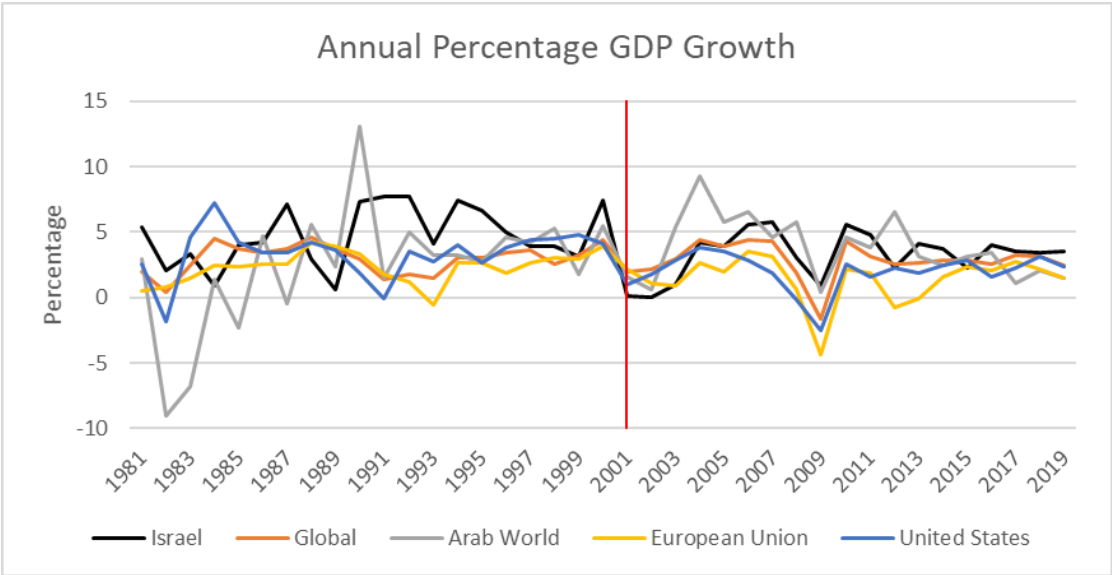


Figure 1: Economic trends from 1981 to 2019. The red line is placed on 2001 to visually mark the differences between the two phases.

Of particular interest to this paper is how Israel has performed relative to the United States, the European Union (EU), and the Arab World (AW), with performance to the world being a smaller consideration.³¹ Global events can easily be discerned on Figure 4. The extreme dip in the Arab World line can be traced to the oil surplus that arose after the oil shortage of the 1980s. 2001 shows another decline because of the disruption that the war in Iraq brought to the

³¹ Arab World and European Union data comes from the World Bank.

Middle East region as a whole as well. Finally, the 2008 recession is seen in the sharp decline in 2009.

Between 1981 and 2001, the Israeli economy grew ~4.5% on average. This rate is slightly less than double that of AW and EU, about 1.3 percentage points more than the United States, and 1.5 percentage points more than the world. While the AW has largely relied on their natural resources to drive their economies, Israel's growth was due to the development of their industries. A large amount of this growth was due to the development of its technology sector. Technology accounted for 37% of Israel's industrial product in 1965 before growing to 58% in 1985 and 70% in 2006.³² Hi-tech exports increased from \$3 billion in 1991 to \$12 billion in 2000.³³

After 2001, Israel GDP grew more slowly as its average annual growth decreased to 3.4%, trailing AW by 0.5 percentage point but growing faster than the EU, US, and global average by 2, 1.4, and 0.5 percentage points, respectively. Israel's robust economy allowed it to weather the 2008 recession better than any of the others by experiencing double the growth of AW, and with the rest of the group experiencing economic contraction.

While Israel's growth has slowed, its technology sector has continued to be a large source of success. In 2006, it exported \$29 billion in hi-tech exports, accounting for 17.3% of the private sector in that year.³⁴ However, in the post 9/11 world, Israel has positioned itself to continue its current role as a technology leader. In addition to the continued positive relations with the United States and France, Israel has jointly funded R&D projects with many other European states as well as China and India.³⁵ The importance of Israel's positioning in this area

³² Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

is something that the government has worked towards since the founding of the state. Technology and its development were bolstered by Israel's high defense spending.³⁶ While Israel now has large scale commercial technology companies, the original driver was the defense industry as it serves as an entry in the private sector firms.³⁷ Israel also has a large amount of human capital in the form of a highly science-literate society.³⁸ The presence of a high proportion of scientists and engineers allows Israel to have a large number of engineers relative to its small population.

The relationship between the United States and Israel also aided the development of Israel's technology. Large American technology corporations, such as IBM and Microsoft, have helped in two ways. The first is they opened regional offices in Israel, both attracting local talent to Israel and sending some of their own people to foster the environment. The second is that larger companies have purchased smaller ones, promoting innovation and increasing entrepreneurship.

II. GDP per capita

As economies have grown, it is interesting to explore how the average person has fared in the economic growth of the state. While GDP per capita is not a representation of the equality/distribution of wealth, it does serve as a starting point for further examination. In the case of Israel, GDP per capita has had a largely linear growth rate. When a regression is done on the data, the R^2 is 0.9627, 0.9619, and 0.9457 for the entire time frame of the study, for 1981 to

³⁶ <https://www.newstatesman.com/science-tech/2021/02/how-israel-became-tech-powerhouse>

³⁷ Bresnahan, pg. 7

³⁸ Bresnahan, pg. 9

2001, 2001 to 2019, and 1981 to 2019, respectively. These regressions confirm that Israel’s per capita is linear.

Between 1981 and 2001, the GDP per capita increased by \$827.97/year. Compared to the Arab World and the global average, Israel’s GDP per capita increased much faster than both groups by a large margin as shown in Figure 10 below. The Israeli economy grew four and half

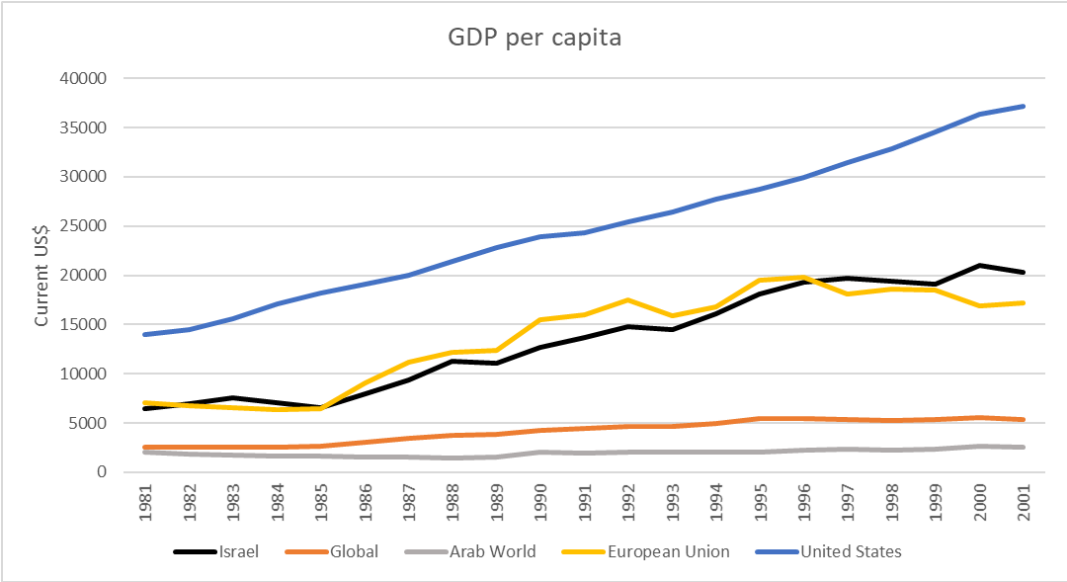


Figure 2: GDP per capita between 1981 and 2001. Numbers were not adjusted for inflation. times

faster than the globe and almost twenty times that of the Arab World, \$180.24 and \$42.29, respectively. The growth in dollar amount compared to the EU was approximately \$110/year greater in favor of Israel, but the two observations were relatively similar through this period.

However, this comparison is not wholly accurate in the case of the Arab World as there are multiple mitigating factors. Firstly, due to the extreme abundance of oil in most Arab states, these states rely on “rents” that foreign governments and corporations pay the state to be allowed to drill for oil in their lands. The high amounts of “rent” that these states take in has effectively curtailed the development of a private sector. The rent is used to provide benefits for the state’s population; high governmental wages, socialized medicine, extremely low taxes, if any taxation at all, are examples. Another factor is that oil wealthy states have a large foreign working

population that is overrepresented in unskilled labor fields such as construction and janitorial services. Compared to the national population, foreign workers earn significantly less money, making GDP per capita unreliable.³⁹ Finally, Arab states are not democratic but kingdoms/sultanates. The difference in governance also likely influences the growth in GDP per capita compared to democratic governments.

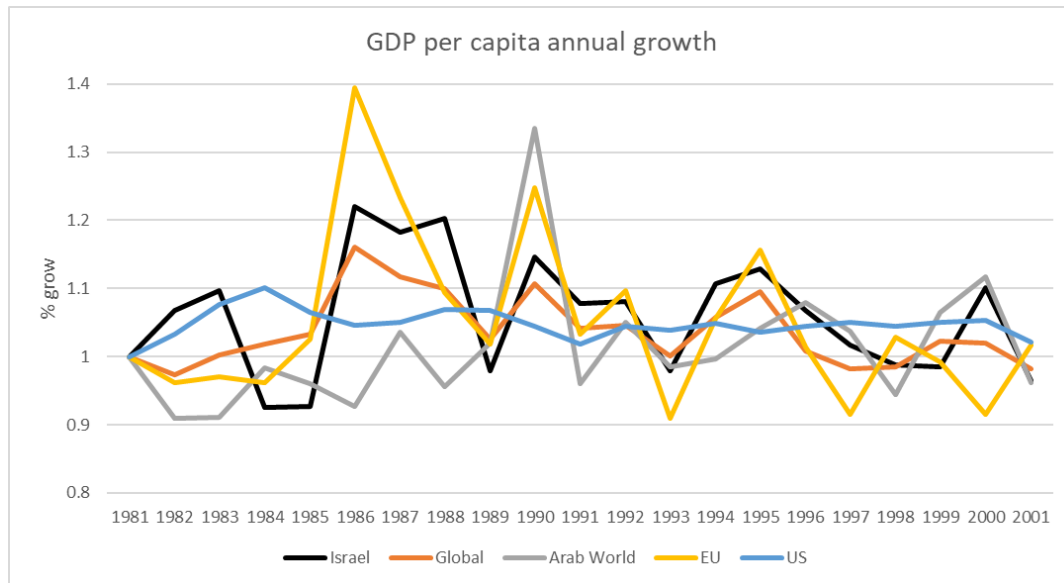


Figure 3: GDP per capita adjusted to give year over year growth. The first year was set to one as it was the starting position for this study, but data wise it was not the same as the year prior.

However, looking at the increase in GDP per capita in terms of dollar amount is not wholly sufficient. A larger economy will naturally allow for more growth as a small increase as a percentage of GDP could result in a large increase in per capita income. Thus, the GDP per capita data was taken and adjusted to yield the annual growth of the GDP per capita of each of the five observations. Ideally, the annual growth will give a better indication of the growth that the average person experienced between 1981 and 2001, allowing for a more fruitful comparison against the post-2001 period later. While not perfect, annual growth provides a level of insulation compared to measuring changes in dollar amount.

³⁹ <https://www.helperchoice.com/c/domestic-workers-salary-survey-middle-east-2016>

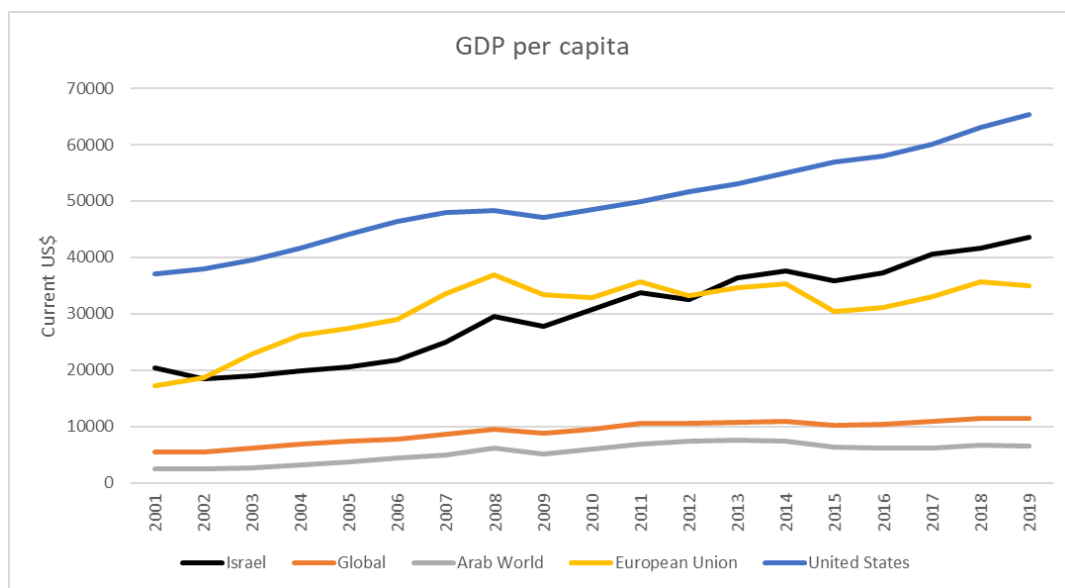
Due to GDP per capita being a composite measurement, it relies on two separate variables that change: GDP and the state's population. A large change in either variable can greatly affect GDP per capita. However, the annual change in GDP per capita reduces the severity of those changes to a number that can be compared across longer periods and produces a number that is meaningful. A percentage change can be used to compare to different periods of the same state or to different states in the same period. It also contextualizes a change in GDP per capita as it can decrease or increase by several hundred to a few thousand dollars, but only change by a small percentage.

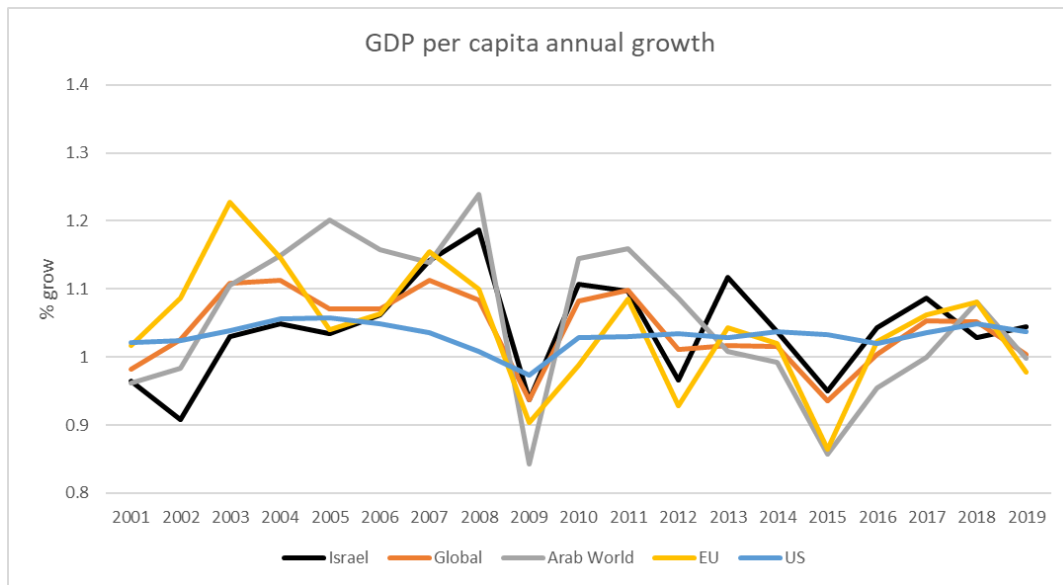
Figure 10 above shows the twenty-year span of the five observations and their fluctuations. As can be seen from Figure 10, and confirmed by the numerical data, the EU and AW experienced maximum year-over-year growth rates at 39.44 and 33.47 percentage points, respectively. On the other hand, they also experienced the lowest growth with maximum contractions of 9.06 and 8.99 percentage points, representatively. So, while the EU and AW both experienced the maximum growth during this period, they also had the largest shrinkages during the economically hard times. Surprisingly, Israel had the highest average annual growth at 5.93 percentage points. This growth was slightly under a full percentage point greater than the next highest; 4.96 percentage points attributed to the EU.

Focusing on Israel and the Arab World, Israel had an average annual growth that was four and a half times greater than the Arab World's growth (5.93 vs 1.32). Israel also had slightly less fluctuations in its growth than the Arab World as the standard deviation was 8.76 and 9.26, respectively. The difference between the average growth of the two can be attributed to some of the reasons listed above, however there are other events that are likely having an influence on these numbers.

The events that were listed under the GDP section are also present in this section as well. For the Arab World, the 1980s oil glut and the Gulf War were very disruptive to the Arab states. The oil glut caused a massive contraction of the economy because oil retrieval and production are critical to the health of these states. The decrease in per capita growth is indicative of that fact as the people, on average, became poorer. Once the price of oil recovered, the economy began to grow rapidly again. However, the economic growth is not reflected because of the large number of foreign workers that are employed in the Middle East. Their presence has a two-fold effect. The first is that many Middle East states experienced a large influx of migrants coming into the state for work, causing the population to swell to the extent that the native population is the minority. The second is that migrants are often employed in low wage jobs as the high wage jobs are reserved for the citizenry to pass along the benefits of the rentier state.

In the case of Israel, the oil glut does not seem to have hampered its growth based on Figure 8. The Gulf War was significant because Iraqi missiles were responsible for damage to property, but not destructive when it came to loss of life. The destruction of property would have hampered economic growth as resources would need to be diverted.





III. POLITICAL SPHERE METRICS

The political system in Israel is highly fragmented. This has been the case since its founding because of the extreme diversity present in Israeli society.⁴⁰ The diversity is present in terms of the ethnic background of the people. Some Jewish people came from Europe and others came from the Middle East and North Africa. These different regions have different values, and those values are present in political parties. The high level of fragmentation can also be attributed to two other factors – the size of the Knesset and differences in religiosity.

The unicameral style of the Knesset limits the number of seats that are available during elections. Many other parliamentary governments have a bicameral system which allows both for more seats in the government and different responsibilities between the two chambers.⁴¹

⁴⁰ Israel Democracy Institute

⁴¹ Using data from the CIA world factbook, a large table was constructed using each UN recognized state as a subject. It was determined that unicameralism is more common than bicameralism, 113 to 82. However, this data only looked at if the legislature of a given state was unicameral or bicameral, not about the type of government

Bicameral systems provide for an increased amount of political diversity due to their larger numbers and the ability to support a wider variety of internal groups such as committees. The loss of efficiency is in addition to the legislature having a small number of seats at 120. The ratio of the population to the number of parliamentary seats is not largely different than the average when compared across states.⁴²

The religious ideologies range from secular to traditional to ultra-Orthodox. These differences are largely irreconcilable because the ultra-Orthodox Jews believe that all Jews should follow their religious rules. Secular Jews do not think that religious practices should affect day-to-day life in terms of business practices and social life. Traditional Jews fall somewhere in between the two. As a result, there are numerous political parties that cater to each of these religious preferences as there is not much overlap between the groups.

Like religiosity, social leanings offer a different facet of political fragmentation. If religion defines the structure of life in Israel, social leanings would be how society functions on a day-to-day basis.

I. Political Parties

As stated above, other than one instance, no party has been able to hold a simple majority in the Knesset due to the fragmentation present in the Israeli political sphere. Relative to the number of seats available, there are many political parties. Currently, there are thirty-seven

and makes no distinction between presidential and parliamentary governments. Thus, this statistic is inaccurate if one is interested in solely parliamentary governments.

⁴² Using the same data from above, the ratio of population / lower seats was calculated. When solely using unicameral governments, the average population per lower seat is 60,301 people/seat, with a standard deviation of 80,174. If bicameral governments are included, the figures increase to 96,922 and 190,722, respectively. Israel itself has a ratio of 65,182, less than 5,000 people away from the mean. Further, lower seats were used because unicameral systems were encoded as having only lower house seats.

active political parties.⁴³ This high number is not largely different from the historical average that has been present in the past few decades.⁴⁴ The importance of the high number of parties is that the Knesset has operated in a constant state of compromise so it cannot be dissolved. A byproduct of this fragmentation is that smaller groups have been able to attain an outsized amount of power. These groups have often been Orthodox groups that only join the coalition if concessions are made to them. The large amount of fragmentation means only about a third of them have a seat in the Knesset.

Just before the first phase under review in this study there was a political “revolution.” It signaled a large shift in the political make-up of the Knesset and Israeli politics. In 1977, the right-wing Likud won a plurality of the seats, defeating then left-wing Alignment alliance of the Israeli Labor Party and Mapam. This election was significant. Since 1977 the Likud party has been very dominant, holding the largest number of seats in most of the subsequent Knessets. The rise of Likud showed a national interest in a strong military with more fiscally conservative economic policies.

II. Effective number of political parties

One way of measuring the number of effective political parties in a political system was created by Laasko and Taagepera in their 1979 paper titled “*Effective Number of Parties: An Application to Europe*.” While the focus of their paper was the application of their model to Europe, it will also work with Israel because it is a parliamentary system like Europe’s political systems. In their paper, Laasko and Taagepera created the equation:

⁴³ TOI Staff

⁴⁴ Jewish Virtual Library, “Parties Running and Winning Seats”

$$N_2 = \frac{1}{\sum_{i=1}^n p_i^2}$$

Where p_i is the fraction share of seats of the i -th party (or share of the vote), n is the number of parties, and N_2 equals the effective number of parties.⁴⁵ This equation is useful because it considers unequal party sizes as the equation uses the share of seats. While simple, the equation provides a way to quantify the concentration of power since rarely, if ever, do all parties have an equal share of seats in the legislature.

The following table was constructed using official government data from the Knesset website.⁴⁶ Before discussing the results, two notes need to be made. The first is that the data that was used was the number of seats that were won during that year's election. In between the Knesset's elections there can be party mergers or splits which cause shifts in both the number of seats that each party had as well as the number of parties overall. The decision to use data from the year of the election was to better reflect the societal attitudes at that point in time.

Year	Parties	Effective parties
2020	8	5.01
Late 2019	9	5.57
Early 2019	11	5.24
2015	10	6.94
2013	12	7.28
2009	12	6.77
2006	12	7.84
2003	13	6.17
1999	15	8.69
1996	11	5.61
1992	10	4.39
1988	15	4.38
1984	15	3.86
1981	10	3.13

Table 1: Parties

The second note is that political alliances are counted as a single party in the calculations. The choice to count political alliances as one was made because the alliance is the entity that was on the ballot in the given year. While alliances do lead to the possibility of undercounting the number of political parties in the Knesset and the effective number of political parties, there is no feasible way to split the alliance into individual components. Since alliances are typically composed of at least one larger and one smaller party, the seats each side holds are not

⁴⁵ Laasko and Taagepera

⁴⁶ https://www.knesset.gov.il/history/eng/eng_hist_all.htmq

equivalent. The analysis does not make note of years when an alliance was present, however there is a table in the appendix that has the full list of parties that were present in each year from 1981 to present. Alliances are designated by a hyphen(s) in the party's name.

As can be seen in Table 1, there is a large difference between the number of political parties in each Knesset and the effective political parties. Except for the Knessets in late 2019 and 2020, every Knesset has had at least ten parties represented. This is also only the number of

parties that were able to gain a seat, there are many more parties in the political system at large. The number of parties relative to the parties that were able to secure representation in the Knesset is shown in Table 2. The striking difference between the number of parties and the effective parties is because each Knesset has had one to two large parties. Since Laasko and Taagepera's equation would produce a result of 1 if there was only one party and 2 for equal status between two parties, the significantly lower number of effective political parties indicates the presence of one or more large parties.

Election	Parties Running	Parties Winning Seats
2021	26	13
2020	30	8
Late 2019	32	9
Early 2019	43	11
2015	25	10
2013	32	12
2009	33	12
2006	31	12
2003	27	13
1999	31	15
1996	20	11
1992	25	10
1988	27	15
1984	26	15
1981	31	10

Table 2: Total parties running versus those that won seats. ~48% of the parties that ran found a seat between 1981 and 2003; ~36% between 2003 and 2021.

Table 1 and the table in the appendix reveal further information about the political landscape. The first item of interest is that the increase in election threshold – the percentage of votes needed to gain seats in the Knesset – has not had a large effect on the number of political parties in the Knesset. The increase in the threshold was performed in steps, increasing to 1.5%, 2%, and finally 3.25%. The table shows there was a predictable decrease in parties after the 1988 election; but, interestingly, the number rose in succeeding elections. Between 2003 and 2014, the

number of parties was virtually unchanged. Only the latest threshold increase shows a sustained decrease in the total number of parties.

The minimum number of seats that the smallest parties hold is in line with the changes in the threshold. Before 1988, there were parties with only one seat. After the first increase in the threshold, the minimum seats increased to two and remained there until the most recent increase in 2014. Since 2014, the minimum number of seats is now four. When looking at the table in the appendix, it becomes clear that each Knesset has had at least one large party. Besides the raw data showing there is one or more large parties, the low estimated number of effective parties

Year	Max	Min	Average	Std. dev
2020	36	6	15	12.39
Late 2019	33	5	13.33	11.10
Early 2019	35	4	10.91	12.00
2015	30	5	12	8.41
2013	31	2	10	8.41
2009	28	3	10	9.18
2006	29	3	10	7.60
2003	38	2	9.23	10.10
1999	26	2	8	7.06
1996	34	2	10.91	11.22
1992	44	2	12	14.29
1988	40	1	8	12.88
1984	44	1	8	14.07
1981	48	1	12	18.76

Table 3: Seat summary statistics with regards to seats held

supports this conclusion. Table 3 has some summary statistics of the Knessets since 1981 regarding seat breakdown. From this table, there are two items of note. The first is that the largest party in each Knesset holds somewhere between 21.6% and 40% of the total seats, the average being 29.5%. These percentages show that while the biggest party has a large amount of power in the Knesset, even the years with the highest number of seats are far from the 51% required for a non-coalition government. This large difference shows why coalition governments have been the norm in Israel since its founding. The second is that the standard deviations are very large compared to the average number of seats. In multiple years the standard deviation is even larger than the average. This skew is apparent by looking at the table in the appendix and seeing that there are one to three

large parties that garner roughly sixty percent of the seats, leaving the other parties to divide up the remaining forty percent.

Between 1980 and 2003, the average number of parties a Knesset had was 12.7 parties. Correspondingly, the average party had 9.4 seats. As table 3 shows, the reality was that the average was not a good fit as evidenced by the very large standard deviations. When the median value is taken for the data range, the median is found to be 4. This is a better descriptor because looking at the table, in each Knesset during this phase the largest party had at least 30 seats, except for the 15th Knesset where the largest party had only 26 seats.

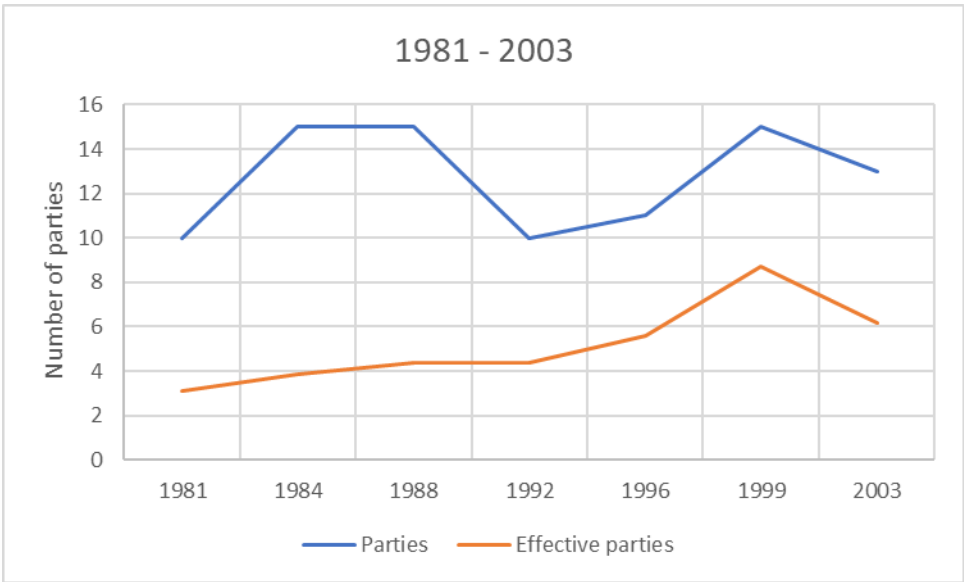


Figure 4: Trend of the number of political parties and effective political parties between 1981 and 2003

When taking a broad view of the political parties in the Knessets, a trend emerges which shows that the number of effective parties steadily rose through the 80s and 90s and suddenly spikes in 1999. This can be seen in Figure 2 above. For context, the average number of effective parties goes up 5.2 per Knesset. The number of effective parties rising can be largely attributed to Likud steadily losing seats from 1981 to 1999. From the table in the appendix, Likud as an individual party held 32 seats in the 13th Knesset, down from 48 in the 10th Knesset. The 15th

Knesset saw Likud form an alliance which also held 32 seats, showing that the right-wing party was in deep trouble. The decline of Likud can be attributed to the major difficulties that the Netanyahu government was facing at the time.

One of the problems the government faced was increased tensions with the United States government regarding Israel's actions during the First Intifada and for the failure of the peace talks with the PLO. The criticism leveled for aggressive military policy was one that had been a constant since the creation of Israel. The other problem was that this phase also coincided with the fall of the Soviet Union. While people had emigrated from eastern Europe in the past, the number of immigrants sharply increased in the 90s.⁴⁷ The large number of immigrants led to another spate of absorption issues because of the sudden increase in demand for housing and services for the new immigrants.⁴⁸

The second phenomenon, the sudden spike, can also be attributed to the vote of no confidence by the Knesset in 1998.⁴⁹ While not unheard of, the vote of no confidence in Netanyahu's government came after its inconsistency regarding Palestinians and their land. His decision to continue building in East Jerusalem despite assurances to the US government to halt construction was then undercut by his signing of the Wye River Memorandum.⁵⁰ This inconsistency of platform coupled with failures to progress peace with the Palestinians led to a vote of no confidence. These actions placed Likud in a highly unfavorable position and lost it almost half of its seats in the Knesset. Since the party is typically a heavyweight, the sudden availability of an extra 20 seats allowed power to be divided more evenly.

⁴⁷ Israel Central Bureau of Statistics

⁴⁸ Glozman

⁴⁹ Ong

⁵⁰ Ibid.

The post 2001 era for Israel was a reversal of what was seen in the first phase. Compared to 1980 – 2003, the 2003 – 2020 block had an average party number of 10.9 (11) per Knesset.⁵¹ Similar to the first phase, this one also shows that the mean is not an accurate measurement of the Knesset as the standard deviations for each year are so large compared to their averages. When checking the median number of seats, the median is 7, almost double that of the first phase. Looking to the large table of seats in the appendix, the largest party does not reach the same extraordinarily high number of seats that were present before. In the case of Likud, whether it was an individual party or part of an alliance, it averaged 30.1 (29.6) seats per Knesset.

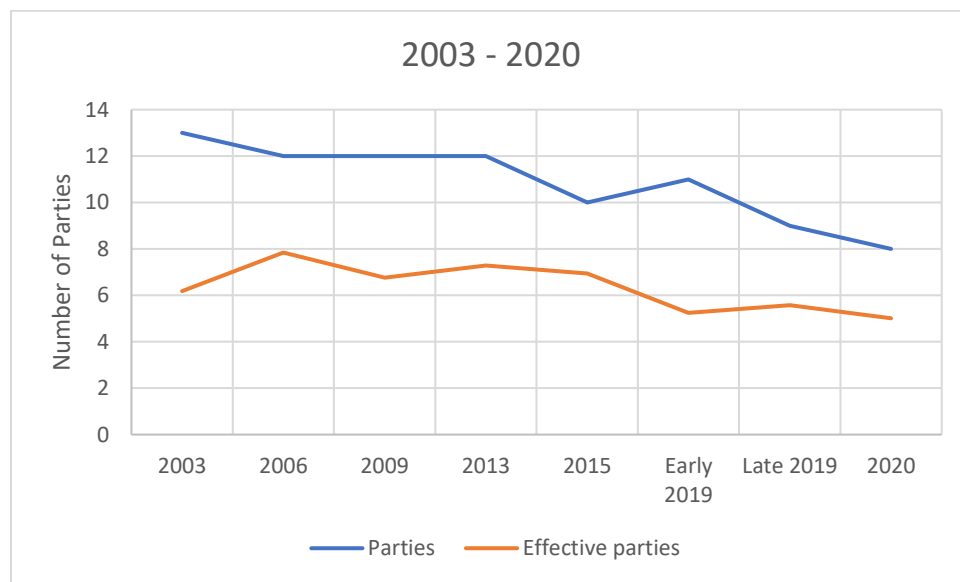


Figure 5: Trend of the number of political parties and effective political parties between 2003 and 2020

As Figure 3 shows, both the number of political parties and the effective number of parties has largely been on the decline. While the consolidation of seats could be attributed to the Likud government of Netanyahu, the Likud party has not been as strong as it was in the past. Likud is one of the oldest parties in Israel and still carries a fairly large number of seats in

⁵¹ The number in parenthesis is the number generated if 2019 is compiled into one year. While the differences between the two numbers is negligible, it was done to have a one-to-one ratio of election to year that was present in the first phase.

elections, but it has suffered problems since 2003. One of the biggest blows to Likud was the departure of former Prime Minister Ariel Sharon in 2005. Frustrated by Likud's inability to change its platform, Sharon left to promote his agenda of a two-state solution and hopeful road to peace with the Palestinians.⁵² After his departure, Sharon founded the new Kadima party. The Kadima party is more moderate than Likud – its ranks hold not only other Likud moderates, but also Labor party defectors.⁵³ However, Likud's fortunes reversed again in the following decade as it began to increase its seat count in the Knesset. This reversal was aided by the adsorption of Kulanu into its ranks, both removing a political rival while also bolstering the number of members in the Knesset.⁵⁴

Another reason Likud's fortunes reversed is that 9/11 was a catalyst for another round of problems in the Middle East. The initial disruption was started by the United States' declaration and subsequent war in Iraq. The original engagement in Iraq eventually spread to Afghanistan and Syria, creating a wider area of unrest and chaos in the region. Adding to this was the subsequent rise of ISIS which added to the number of hostile actors in Syria as well as the Arab Spring and Jasmine Revolution. The chaos in the surrounding region meant that there was opportunity for parties with a national defense or military platform to ascend to gain power. Since these ideologies are typically part of the right-wing parties, Likud regained power.

Likud was able to regain power because of the increased tension and fighting in the region. The Second Lebanon War in 2006 and the mortar attacks by Hamas in 2008 were influenced by 9/11. Hezbollah was the force Israel fought in the Second Lebanon War, and while it was not the first time the two sides had fought, the war and subsequent battles occurred at an increased

⁵² Vause et al.

⁵³ Shipman

⁵⁴ Newman, "Likud Okays Merger"

frequency. Additionally, Hamas was influenced by the ascension of Turkey's Erdogan to the premiership as part of the AKP; a right wing, national conservatist party.

III. Party manifestos

Party manifestos can be a source of information regarding changes in the political culture of a state because a party will incorporate relevant ideas into its platform. An example of this would be the Democratic Party in the United States adopting the ideas of universal healthcare and student loan forgiveness into its platform. However, party manifestos in Israel are not revisions of previous versions, making it difficult to track changes in platforms over time. As a result, data from the Manifesto Project was used to observe movements to the political right in conservative parties and social democratic parties. These two groups were chosen because each includes one of the oldest Israeli parties.

For clarity, Likud is labeled as The Consolidation while Labor is called the Israel Labour Party. Likud and Labor were also selected because they provide a consistent presence in the political sphere. Other parties have either lost their seat in the Knesset; merged into a new party; merged and retained the name of one of the parties; or simply dissolved. For Figures 4 – 7, the y-axis is right-left position. A higher value indicates that a party has moved toward the right of the political spectrum. A lower, or negative, value indicates the reverse.

For the 1981 – 2001 phase, the conservative parties in Figure 4 overall experienced a rightward shift to varying degrees. Since Likud is the focus, it started from a strong center right position before moving further right for the 1984, 1992, and 1996 elections. The rightward shift is expected given the Lebanon War and Likud's platform of conservatism and Zionism. The decrease in 1999 can be tied to the party trying to reverse its fortunes. The alliance between

Likud, Gesher, and Tzomet and its failure to secure more votes in 1996 than Likud secured by itself in 1992 shows the decline of the right-wing in the mid-to-late 1990s – making their later resurgence post 9/11 significant. The table in the appendix shows the sharp decline in Likud seats during this time. The decline can be traced to the constant push for peace by the prime ministers that produced good to mixed results. As such, a right-wing party is not politically in vogue during the late 1990s and on.

On the other hand, Figure 5 shows that the social democratic parties largely moved more to the left. Alignment – an alliance between Labor and Mapam – moved toward the center slightly. The Labor Party remained center but did experience a rightward shift for the 1996 election. This shift could possibly be explained as the party’s attempt to undercut the Likud alliance prior to the election. However, this tactic did not work as Labor lost seats in the 1996 election.

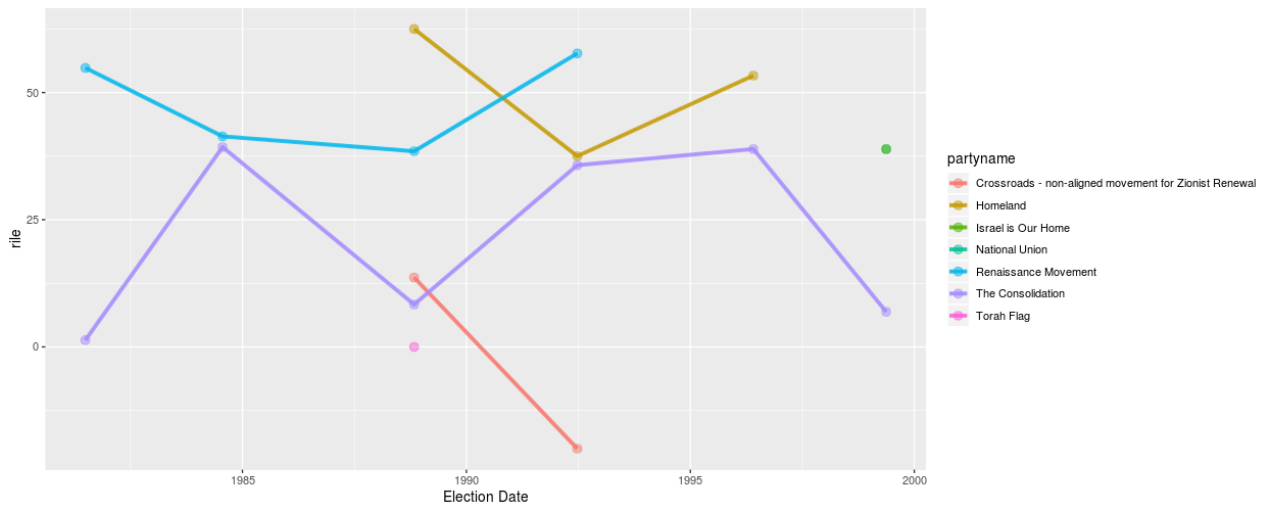


Figure 6: Conservative parties between 1981 and 2001

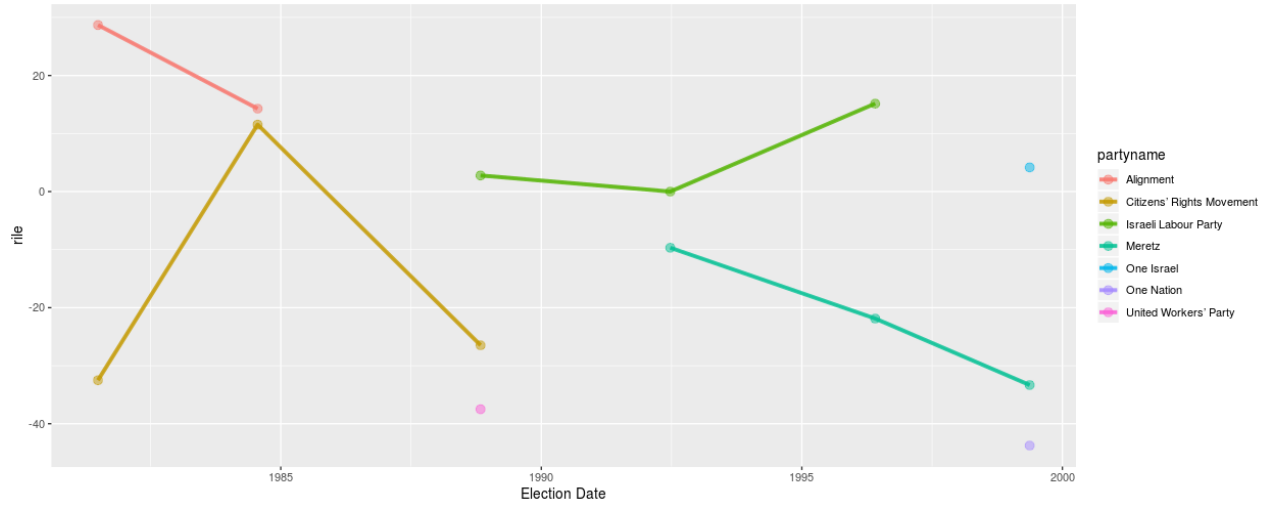


Figure 7: Social democratic parties between 1981 – 2001

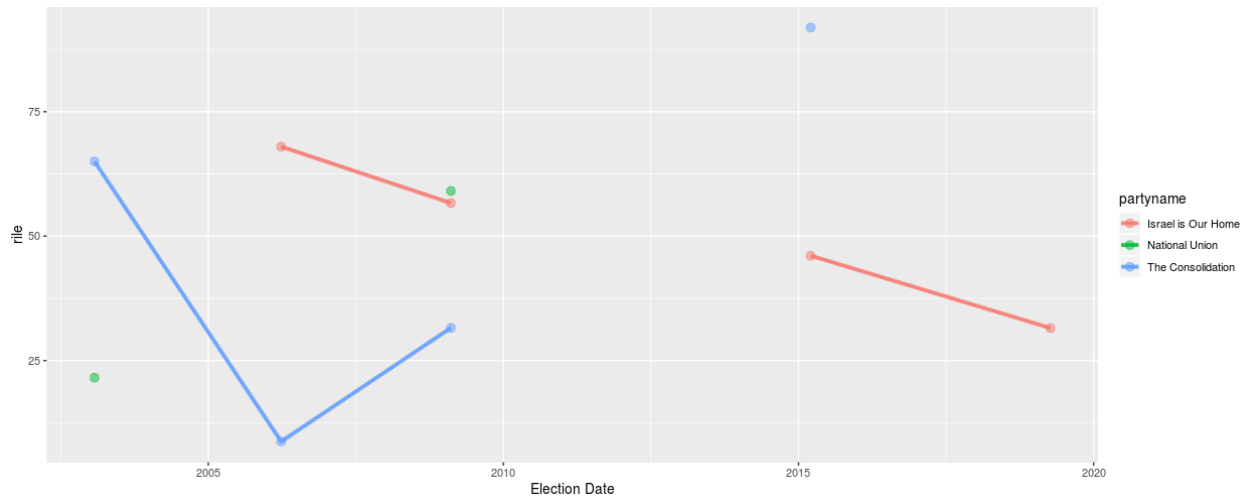


Figure 8: Conservative parties post 2001

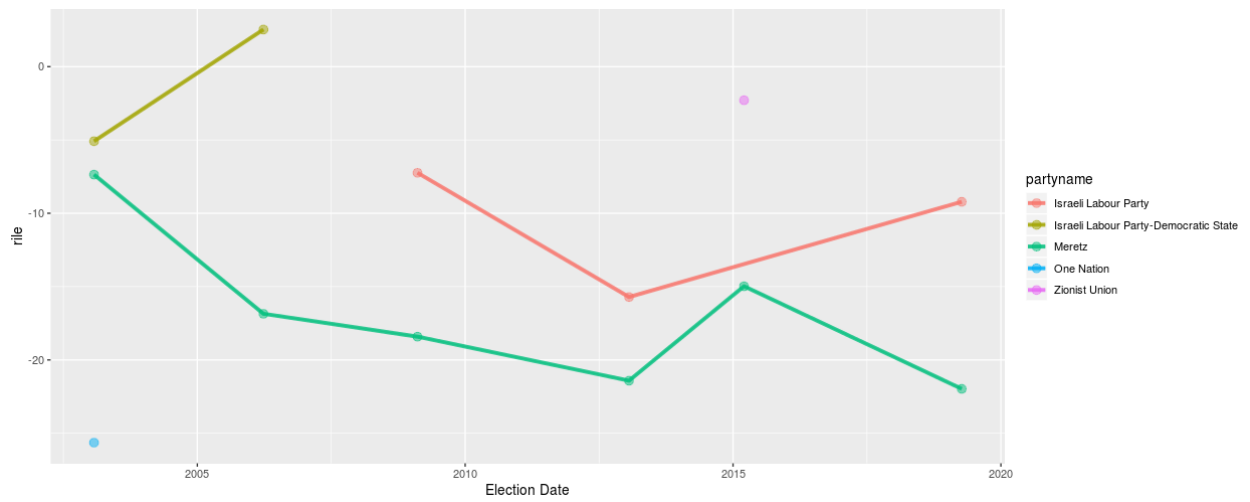


Figure 9: Social democratic parties post 2001

Post 2001, Likud started in a far-right position, sitting at approximately 63. This high initial position was likely due to the influence of 9/11 and the ensuing unrest in the Middle East. Thus, it would have made political sense to play to their strengths. The later move toward the center was likely a response to the Kadima split. The effect of the split can be seen in the reduced number of seats in the Knesset in 2006. On the social democratic side, Labor moved more to the left since 2001. This move to the left is most likely a response to the public's negative reaction to the Lebanon war as there were immediate demonstrations against the war.⁵⁵ By taking a stronger stance on a two-state solution, it would have made Labor more favorable going into the vote for the next round of elections.

IV. POLITICAL ACTOR METRICS

The political culture of Israel is somewhat unique in terms of its construction. The government of Israel is parliamentary in style. It has three branches of government with executive, legislative, and judicial branches. Israel also has both a president and a prime minister, but the two positions are very unequal in terms of their scope, power, and their purpose. This section will briefly introduce the main political actors before going into more depth in their own succeeding sections. The individual sections will also begin the analysis of looking at actions from 1981 to 2001 and 2001 to the present.

The parliament is called the Knesset and is unicameral. The parliament consists of 120 members who are elected to four-year terms by the electorate.⁵⁶ The Knesset has the power to create, enact, and repeal laws. Seats are allocated through proportional representation from the parties on the ballot. The current election threshold is set at 3.25%, but this percentage was

⁵⁵ Beiniv

⁵⁶ Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Knesset

increased from 1% a few years ago.⁵⁷ The increase in the election threshold meant that any party that wants a seat must receive approximately twice the number of votes than in previous years. Parties that were only able to secure one seat are now likely to be pushed out of government due to this increase. Other than once in the mid-1960s, no political party has been able to win an outright majority of the seats in the Knesset.

The president oversees domestic affairs as the head of state. When it comes to political power, the president does not have much; the position is largely ceremonial in nature. The president signs laws and treaties that were adopted by the Knesset.⁵⁸ The president is also in charge of the appointment of judges and the reception of foreign diplomats.⁵⁹ The most significant responsibility the president has is that they select the prime minister, which has led to controversy in the past with the rare prime minister being selected from the non-majority party. The presidency itself does not create laws or appoint heads of departments. The president's role in the government is like Great Britain's monarch in terms of influence over the political process.

The prime minister is the head of the government of Israel. The prime minister is responsible for international and domestic policy and the appointment of cabinet ministers. Like most parliamentary systems, the prime minister is selected from members of the Knesset. The prime minister is selected through recommendations of party representatives and appointed by the president.⁶⁰ The prime minister helps to create laws and appoints those who can help guide the country. Additionally, the prime minister appoints cabinet members to head a ministry for both political and personal reasons. Since there has never been a simple majority in Israel's

⁵⁷ Ronen

⁵⁸ Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, President

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Executive

history, the appointment of cabinet members is an important part of forming a government as it is used to draw other parties into the coalition government.

The supreme court is the highest court in Israel and has the power to rule on the legality of governmental decisions. The court has a dual role in that it is both a high court of justice and an appellate court. Thus, it can take on issues that are being heard for the first time as well as appeals regarding previous court cases. Justices are appointed by the president and are politically insulated by having a permanent appointment until the mandatory age of retirement of 70.⁶¹

I. The Knesset

As discussed, the Knesset is a unicameral legislature with 120 seats. While it is not unique, unicameral legislatures are more common than their bicameral cousins.⁶² One of the main reasons for choosing a unicameral legislature is to be more democratic and efficient in law making.

Often, a bicameral legislature is created to have representation for different social classes or groups. An example of this is the United Kingdom's Parliament where the House of Lords is the upper chamber where members are appointed and is reserved for those with titles and the House of Commons is the lower chamber whose members are elected. While the bicameral system ensures that there are more voices heard, this does not present a situation that is necessary for Israel – mainly due to Israel being a religious homeland for the Jews. The optics of being a religious homeland means that “Israel embodies in theory, ideology, and practice exclusive Jewish state ownership in the sense that Israel is the state of the Jewish people only.”⁶³

⁶¹ Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Judiciary

⁶² IPU PARLINE

⁶³ Smooha et al., 256.

Due to its religious nature, in theory there was no need to form a bicameral legislature as the only group that needed to be represented were the Jews, with Christians and Muslims being an afterthought. However, the initial premise of a unicameral system being more efficient than a bicameral system no longer holds for the Knesset. The loss of efficiency can be seen in the number of bills that have been put forth in the Knesset in recent years.⁶⁴ As can be seen in Figure 1 below, the number of bills has greatly increased.⁶⁵ Particularly, the number of private bills promoted by Knesset members has grown by large margins. The amount of private bills grew from approximately 500 in the 10th Knesset (1981) to 1500 in the 12th Knesset (1988) and over 3000 in the following Knesset: an increase of about seven-fold in the span of only twelve years. Between the 15th and 20th Knessets, there were an average of 4000 private bills, with a peak of 6000 in the 20th. The number of bills is a stark contrast to the number of laws that were passed, a number that has been consistent.

The high number of bills is indicative of the fragmentation in Israeli society as the concept of party discipline is falling by the wayside. The strong resurgence of Likud and the increasing prevalence of fighting along Israel's borders makes it more politically viable for a Knesset member to make their own position visible. It also reflects the problems that Israel is experiencing with forming and holding a government based on later governments that last a year or less.

⁶⁴ Lis

⁶⁵ Friedburg et al. Table 1 was taken from this article in its entirety.

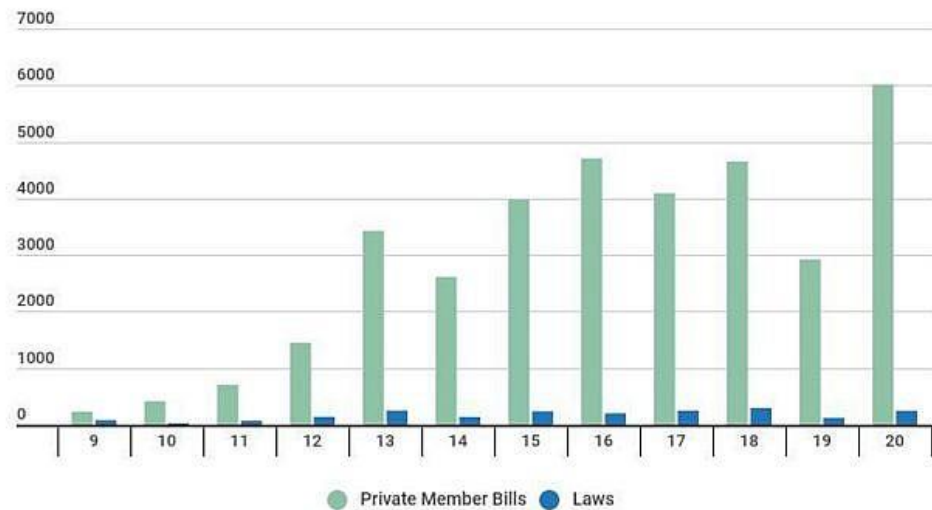


Figure 10: Knesset 9 correlates to 1977, Knesset 20 is 2015.

II. The Presidency: 1981 – 2001

The selection of the president requires an absolute majority vote by the Knesset.⁶⁶ Unlike the prime minister, the presidency is eligible to any adult Israeli citizen. As mentioned above, the president appoints senior state officials such as Supreme Court justices, judges, and the State Comptroller, among others.⁶⁷ However, unlike Knesset members and the prime minister, the presidential terms operate independently of parliamentary terms. This approach has two benefits. The first is that it enables a consistency of government that would be otherwise lacking when the Knesset is dissolved because there are no midterm elections or staggered terms. The second benefit is providing a level of political insulation for the person holding the office. Notably, there was a small change to the term of the president in 2000. Prior to this, a presidential term was five years, with there being a two-term limit. Now, the president is limited to a single seven-year term.⁶⁸

⁶⁶ Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, President

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

In the following section, the focus will be on the background of each president, the notable things they accomplished, and searching for commonalities among them. Since the president is not capable of creating or passing legislation themselves, they cannot be examined based upon policy trends or decisions. However, political leanings will be examined as it can provide a way to look for similarities or contrasts to the prime minister(s) during their concurrent tenures. Finally, the presidents in the pre-2001 period will provide for a baseline to monitor changes that can be quantified.

Yitzhak Navon (1978-1983) – Alignment (Labor); politician, educator, author

Prior to his role as the President, Navon worked in senior administrative posts of government under Ben-Gurion and Sharett. He was eventually appointed as the head of the Cultural Division of the Ministry of Education and Culture, where he employed hundreds of soldiers turned teachers to improve the Israeli literacy rate.⁶⁹ During this time he was also elected to the Knesset and was active in several committees. Much of his time was spent working to improve relations between Israel and the Diaspora as he was chairman of committees that worked to support those in the Diaspora and improve relations with the United States.

Navon's presidency was characterized by actions that were at times cohesive and at other times divisive. His presidency was cohesive as Navon worked to bring different peripheral factions into the mainstream. He was able to do so by going to disadvantaged neighborhoods and offering governmental encouragement and aid.⁷⁰ Navon also worked to bridge the divides between different groups across all spectrums of religious, political, ethnic, and social spheres. This work paid dividends when the withdrawal from Sinai occurred, and the unrest was far less than it would have been otherwise.

⁶⁹ <https://www.mfa.gov.il/mfa/aboutisrael/state/pages/yitzhak%20navon.aspx>

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

On the other hand, Navon was divisive because he criticized the government for not creating an independent commission on the refugee camps in Lebanon regarding the massacre of Muslims. Navon's criticism marked a transition in the presidency of Israel and ushered in the concept of a "political" presidency, departing from the strict ceremonial role as described by the law.⁷¹ Navon also met with Egyptian President Sadat at Sadat's request and did much to help disperse tensions between the two states.

Chaim Herzog (1983-1993) – Alignment (Labor); attorney, general, diplomat, author

Before Herzog was elected as the president of Israel, he was largely a military man. Prior to the foundation of Israel, he served in the Haganah during the Arab Revolt in the late 1930s.⁷² After that, he enlisted in the British army and served during the Normandy campaign in Germany before retiring. After Israel was established, Herzog became an officer in the IDF and rose to the rank of general before retiring in the early 1960s.⁷³ He was called back to active duty temporarily after the Six-Day War.

Two years before he was elected to the presidency, he was elected to the Knesset but retired from it upon his election. During his time as president, Herzog was largely committed to bettering Israel's international standing. He visited more than thirty countries as president, including some of the first visits by the Israeli head of state.⁷⁴ In addition to his state visits, Herzog emphasized the importance of Israel to Jewish life and his belief in Jewish education. He also took time to visit the ethnic minorities in Israel and Jews in contested regions of the border.

Unlike his predecessor, Herzog did not publicly criticize the government. However, he was still political during his terms. He was critical of Saddam Hussain and called Iraq "the

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² <https://mfa.gov.il/MFA/AboutIsrael/State/Pages/Chaim%20Herzog.aspx>

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

capital of world terror.”⁷⁵ Herzog also used his pardoning power in controversial cases such as reducing the sentences of the members of the Jewish Underground from life to ten years.⁷⁶ During his tenure, Herzog was also critical to the formation of the government due to his constant presence as the president.

Ezer Weizman (1993-2000) – Alignment (Labor); air force general, politician, businessman

Like Herzog, Weizman was heavily involved in the military prior to his political experiences. Weizman joined Great Britain’s Royal Air Force and served in India and Egypt during World War II.⁷⁷ Afterward, he served in the Israeli Air Force, eventually becoming the Commander-in-Chief of the IAF.⁷⁸ In the following decade, he was promoted further and was the architect of Israel’s victory over the Egyptian air force in the Six Day War. Shortly after the war, Weizman retired from the military and began a political career.

Weizman’s political career was as successful as his military one. Only eight years into it, he helped run Likud leader Begin’s campaign that saw him become the prime minister, earning Weizman the position as the Minister of Defense.⁷⁹ Subsequently, Weizman was a member of the Camp David Accords negotiation team with Begin. He retired from politics briefly in 1980 to focus on business. He ultimately returned to government with the dovish Yahad party he founded, winning a small number of seats in the 1984 election.⁸⁰ He retired from politics eight years later, only to be elected president in the succeeding year.

As president, Israel and its neighbors were the base of his locally oriented focus. While Weizman was hawkish at the beginning of his political career, those attitudes gave way to dovish

⁷⁵ Padilla and Soble

⁷⁶ AP

⁷⁷ <https://mfa.gov.il/MFA/AboutIsrael/State/Pages/Ezer%20Weizman.aspx>

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

ideals. His role as a negotiator in the Camp David Accords led him to seek peace with PLO chairman Yasser Arafat during his tenure as president. Weizman's commitment to his people led him to visit northern towns that were under attack, going so far as to stay with local citizens and sleep in the bunkers with soldiers.⁸¹ Further, he would criticize the government when he thought there was a lack of effort in the peace-making process.

Among the three presidents between 1981 and 2001, there are some observable similarities. The first is that all three of them were part of Alignment, which went on to become the Labor party after Mapam merged into Labor, during their tenure as president. The political positioning of Alignment was center left. One of the biggest ideologies of Labor is the tenet of the two-state solution. The general desire for peace can be seen in the three presidents' focus on groups that were not solely Israeli: Navon's focus to bring fringe groups into politics, Herzog visiting ethnic minorities, and Weizman being critical of the government not making adequate steps toward peace.

These three presidents also served at a turning point in Israeli politics. Before Begin, all the prime ministers were from Alignment. However, Begin's ascent to power meant that the president and the prime minister were on opposite sides of the political spectrum. It should be noted that Navon was the beginning of the so called "political" presidency because of his criticisms of the government. Since there was no longer a need to follow the party line, speaking against the government became a novel action.

III. The Presidency: 2001 – 2021

Moshe Katsav (2000-2007) – Likud; social leader, politician

⁸¹ Ibid.

Katsav had a relatively quiet political career before he was elected to the presidency. After serving in the Israeli army, he went to university and earned a degree in economics. While he was a student, he was elected as the mayor of his hometown.⁸² After serving as mayor, he was elected to the Knesset in 1977 as a member of Likud.

During his time in the Knesset, he was a minister of multiple departments. He was the Deputy Minister of Housing and Construction and the minister of three departments: Labor and Social Affairs, Transportation, and Tourism.⁸³ The shuffling was due to Likud losing power throughout the 80s and early 90s.⁸⁴ While he was the Minister of Tourism, he was also the Deputy Prime Minister. Despite holding multiple high-ranking positions, Katsav did not garner much attention during this period and was described as unassuming by fellow politicians and by the media.⁸⁵

Katsav's tenure as president was much the same as his time in the Knesset. His presidency marked the first time a Likud member held the office. While his presidency was not notable outside of his scandal involving female subordinates, his election was noteworthy. When Katsav was put forward as Likud's choice for president, his opponent was the former Prime Minister Shimon Peres. Despite the large political acumen between the two men, Katsav was able to win not because of his own charisma or talent, but because of Peres' promise to use the presidency to support the unpopular Barak government.⁸⁶

Shimon Peres (2007-2014) – Kadima; statesman, public servant, and parliamentarian

⁸² <https://www.thefreelibrary.com/Spotlight+%3A+Moshe+Katsav.-a0183559785>

⁸³ <https://mfa.gov.il/MFA/MFA-Archive/2002/Pages/Moshe%20Katsav.aspx>

⁸⁴ East, p. 248.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Ibid, p. 249.

Prior to his presidency, Peres had a very active political life. Most notably, he had already served as prime minister in two non-consecutive terms in the mid-1980s and mid-1990s. Before his political career, Peres spent approximately ten years in the Israeli armed forces. During Israel's war for independence, Peres was the head of the navy; later joining the Ministry of Defense and being promoted to Director-General.⁸⁷ In his role as Director-General, Peres was responsible for developing the Franco-Israeli relationship that saw the large purchase of arms from France.⁸⁸ In addition to developing Israel's arms supply, Peres was instrumental in planning Israel's involvement in the Suez War with French and British leaders and was responsible for Israel's first nuclear reactor.⁸⁹

In 1959, Peres left the position of Director-General and was elected to the Knesset, a position he held for almost fifty years, and appointed as the Deputy Minister of Defense. While a member of the Knesset, Peres showed himself to be a shrewd politician. He left Mapai in the mid-1960s to become the Secretary General of Rafi only to later help reunite the two parties in the late-1960s.⁹⁰ Following the reunification, he held four ministerial roles, ultimately culminating in Minister of Defense. He was given that position following the Yom Kipper War, and in this position, he strengthened the IDF and assisted in negotiations with Egypt.⁹¹ In the mid-1980s, Peres served two years as the rotating prime minister with Yitzhak Shamir. During the years he was not prime minister, he was the minister of two high ranking cabinets in addition to being deputy prime minister.

⁸⁷ <https://mfa.gov.il/MFA/AboutIsrael/State/Personalities/Pages/Shimon%20Peres.aspx>

⁸⁸ Ziv.

⁸⁹ Kunz, p. 108.

⁹⁰ <https://mfa.gov.il/MFA/AboutIsrael/State/Personalities/Pages/Shimon%20Peres.aspx>

⁹¹ Ibid.

The 1990s saw Labor regain strength in the Knesset and Peres once again promoted to Minister of Foreign Affairs. In this role, he conducted negotiations with the PLO that culminated in the signing of the Declaration of Principles, a document that established limited Palestinian self-rule and contained other guidelines for the duration of its five-year plan.⁹² The brokering of a deal ultimately led Peres to receive the Nobel Peace Prize along with Yassir Arafat and Yitzhak Rabin. Peres second term as prime minister came after the assassination of Rabin, and this term lasted seven months as it was near the general elections. After the elections, he was given another minister position and served several more years with Labor before leaving the party to join the newly formed Kadima.⁹³

As president, Peres operated in much the same fashion as he did in the past. His inaugural speech was dedicated to the idea of making Israel a welcome place for all, not just the Jews or the Israelis.⁹⁴ His hawkish views had been well replaced by dovish ones, the Valley of Peace initiative, a program to build economic cooperation between Israel and its neighbors, was proposed in 2008.⁹⁵

Reuven Rivlin (2014-Present) – Likud; attorney, politician, parliamentarian

Prior to his political career, he served in the IDF as an intelligence officer during the Six-Day War.⁹⁶ During his service, he rose to the rank of major and then attended university to earn a law degree. Following university, he was a legal advisor for his favorite football team, later

⁹² <https://mfa.gov.il/MFA/ForeignPolicy/Peace/Guide/Pages/Declaration%20of%20Principles%20-%20Main%20Points.aspx>

⁹³ <https://mfa.gov.il/mfa/aboutisrael/state/pages/shimon%20peres.aspx>

⁹⁴ <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2007/jul/16/israel.comment>

⁹⁵ <https://www.jpost.com/Business/Business-News/A-valley-of-economic-harmony>

⁹⁶ <https://mfa.gov.il/MFA/MFA-Archive/2003/Pages/Reuven%20Rivlin.aspx>

becoming the manager and chairman. Rivlin was also a member of various smaller councils during the late-1970s and early-1990s.⁹⁷

Rivlin was elected to the Knesset in 1988 and during his tenure served on many committees such as Finance, Foreign Affairs and Defense, and Ethics, among others.⁹⁸ In the early 2000s he was the Minister of Communications and then served as the Speaker of the Knesset.⁹⁹ Upon his election to the presidency, Rivlin resigned from the Knesset.

During his presidency, Rivlin carried the party ideal of a one state solution. However, Rivlin's variation involved giving full rights to Palestinians instead of removing Palestinians from the land.¹⁰⁰ Rivlin's idea was unpopular as neither the liberal nor the right-wing support such a solution. Liberals want a two-state solution to ensure Israel remains a Jewish state while the right-wing wants to push the Arabs out of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. In addition, he condemned violence against Arabs and the anti-Muslim and anti-Christian sentiments present in Israel.¹⁰¹

Comparing the presidents post-2001 to those pre-2001, there is not a significant difference between the actions of the two groups. In the pre-2001 group, the concept of a political presidency was born and was utilized to different degrees by each president. Weizman's criticism of the pre-2001 government for not making progress towards peace was a prime example of the politicization of the office. Moving forward into the post-2001 era, Rivlin also used the position to voice criticisms. However, Rivlin criticized groups he found to be problematic such as extremists, terrorists, and Israeli society in general due to the pervasive

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ <https://lobelog.com/profile-9-facts-about-israeli-president-reuven-rivlin-profile/>

¹⁰¹ <https://www.jpost.com/Christian-News/Greek-Patriarch-praises-Rivlin-for-defending-minorities-and-condemning-violence-438644>

nature of anti-Arab sentiments. Regarding its political nature, there does not seem to be a difference between how the two groups advocated for their chosen causes.

On a broad scale, the post-2001 presidents did not have the party unity that the pre-2001 presidents retained. All three were party of Likud, or were part of Likud previously. Peres was a member of the centrist Kadima; Kadima being a party of moderates from both Likud and Labor. The shift to the right could be attributed to 9/11 as the post-2001 era saw Likud being the largest party, either by itself or in an alliance with another party or two. While the office of the president is insulated from Knesset elections, it did show a rightward movement along the political spectrum after 9/11.

Without 9/11, or more accurately the American response to it, it is unlikely for this shift to have occurred because the region was trending toward peace in the 1990s. This is not to say there were not setbacks or violent conflicts, but the prime ministers during this period make great overtures to Arab leaders to produce a lasting, stable peace.

IV. The Prime Minister: 1981 – 2001

The office of the prime minister in Israel is one of tenuous power. The reason for this is that Israel has always been led by coalition governments due to the extremely fractionalized political system. As will be shown in the section on political parties, while the number of parties in the Knesset has been approximately ten over the past forty years, only about one third to one half of the parties running in an election are able to gain a seat. The presence of twenty to thirty parties in an election is an incredibly high number. Ultimately, the necessity of a coalition government

means that the prime minister's party does not have a simple majority and can find itself in the political minority if the prime minister proposes unpopular legislation.¹⁰²

In this section on the prime ministers, it will largely focus on the types of legislation that each prime minister put forth or notable things they accomplished. Since the prime minister is the head of the government it is more beneficial to look at how the prime minister guided Israel. Additionally, the prime minister is not politically insulated like the president, making their decisions have a higher cost if they chose a politically unpopular path.

Menachem Begin Likud; 1977-1983

During his time as prime minister, Begin was a strong leader. With his selection to the position of prime minister, he ushered in a new era that broke the political stranglehold Alignment had on the position. Almost as significant as Likud's ascension to the prime ministership, Begin too was significant to Israel's development. One of his first acts was to abolish tuition for secondary education.¹⁰³ He also focused on developing poor towns and neighborhoods by improving infrastructure such as roads and street lighting, adding adequate housing, and improving schools and hospitals.¹⁰⁴

Begin also attempted to change the economy by introducing policies to move from a socialist economy toward a free market by decreasing the role of the government in the economy.¹⁰⁵ These changes had mixed success with inflation growing rapidly toward the end of his tenure and beyond. Additionally, poverty had doubled under Begin's administration.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰² Mahler, 161.

¹⁰³ Lazlin, p. 60.

¹⁰⁴ <https://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/AboutIsrael/State/Pages/Menachem%20Begin.aspx>

¹⁰⁵ <https://eh.net/encyclopedia/a-brief-economic-history-of-modern-israel/>

¹⁰⁶ Dery, p. 5.

However, there was also a corresponding higher standard of living and an interest in accruing wealth.

Begin's largest success was his negotiating a peace treaty with Egyptian President Sadat. The most important aspect of the peace with Egypt was that it removed Egypt as a potential enemy and enabled Israel to not be surrounded by hostile states.¹⁰⁷ It had the knock-on effect of allowing for the decrease of defense spending and allow for a more focused use of the military and more diverse use of government funds.¹⁰⁸ The peace treaty with Israel does not mean that Begin only sought peace. Later in his term, Begin authorized the bombing of the Iraq's nuclear reactor and began a war with the PLO in successive years.¹⁰⁹

Yitzhak Shamir Likud; 1983-1984 & 1986-1992

Shamir's first term as prime minister was the fulfillment of Begin's term after Begin stepped down from the position following negative public opinion regarding the war in Lebanon. During this year, Shamir focused on the economy to try and put a stop to the massive inflation that began under Begin.¹¹⁰ His effort was not largely successful as the 1984 election resulted in a national unity government. Likud and Labor agreed upon rotating prime ministers with Peres serving the first two years and Shamir the second two.¹¹¹

His second term was marked by war and political problems. During his time as the deputy prime minister under Peres, Shamir worked with President Reagan to build the framework for a strategic cooperation and trade agreement between the two states.¹¹² Upon

¹⁰⁷ <https://www.fpri.org/article/2020/01/menachem-begin-and-his-lasting-contribution-to-israeli-foreign-policy-and-national-security/>

¹⁰⁸ <https://www.fpri.org/article/2020/01/menachem-begin-and-his-lasting-contribution-to-israeli-foreign-policy-and-national-security/>

¹⁰⁹ <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/menachem-begin>

¹¹⁰ <https://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/AboutIsrael/State/Pages/Yitzhak%20Shamir.aspx>

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/yitzhak-shamir>

reelection Shamir was again part of a national unity government, but without the rotation with Labor like there previously war. Near the end of his term, the Gulf War started. While Iraq was launching missiles into Israel, Shamir chose to not retaliate because of US fear that Arab allies would abandon the US led force.¹¹³ Later in 1991 Shamir attended the Madrid Peace Conference, an event that began talks with Israel's neighboring states for the first time.¹¹⁴

Shimon Peres Labor; 1984-1986 & 1995-1996

As mentioned above, Peres' first term was part of a rotation with Likud's Yitzhak Shamir. During this period Peres too focused on the economy. With the support of a Palestinian labor union, Peres was able to reduce the annual inflation rate from a staggering 400% to 16%.¹¹⁵ He was also involved in the withdrawal of troops from Lebanon.

His second short term in the mid-1990s came because of Peres finishing the term of Rabin after he was assassinated. Prior to this term, Peres and Rabin were in negotiations with the PLO that led to the Declaration of Principles and the withdrawal from Gaza.¹¹⁶ The short time Peres was prime minister saw him attempt to maintain the movement towards peace in the face of attacks by Palestinian terrorists.¹¹⁷

Yitzhak Rabin Labor; 1992-1995

For Rabin, this was his second term as prime minister with his first being a four-year term in the mid to late 1970s. During this term, Rabin oversaw the Oslo Accords with Peres and PLO leader Yassar Arafat.¹¹⁸ The significance of the Oslo Accords was the creation of the

¹¹³ <https://mfa.gov.il/mfa/aboutisrael/history/pages/the%20gulf%20war%20-%201991.aspx>

¹¹⁴ <https://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/AboutIsrael/State/Pages/Yitzhak%20Shamir.aspx>

¹¹⁵ <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/shimon-peres>

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ <https://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/AboutIsrael/State/Pages/Yitzhak%20Rabin.aspx>

Palestinian National Authority, the PLO recognizing Israel, and Israel recognizing the PLO.¹¹⁹

The negotiation and signing of the accords saw the three men be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. In the following year, Rabin signed a peace treaty with Jordan, promoting further peace between Israel and its Arabic neighbors.

Economically Rabin had many significant policies. He increased spending on education, health, and public works. At the time of his death, teachers' and doctors' wages had increased, new colleges were built, and new infrastructure projects such as airports and railways were started.¹²⁰ However, these reforms did create a spending deficit due to his reluctance to privatize more of the economy.¹²¹

Benjamin Netanyahu Likud; 1996-1999

Netanyahu's first term as prime minister coincided with the first direct election of the prime minister. For this term, he defeated long time politician Shimon Peres for the position. Netanyahu began his term with criticism of the Oslo Accords and a slowdown in the peace building process.¹²² However, despite his disagreement with the Accords, he continued with their implementation. A year into his term, Netanyahu met with Arafat to discuss the progression of the Accords. The result of their talks was the Hebron Agreement that saw Israel redeploy troops to the Hebron region while giving control to most of the area to the Palestinian Authority.¹²³

However, the lack of substantial peace building led to the Wye River Memorandum. While both Netanyahu and Arafat signed the Memorandum, there was not much progress on

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ <https://www.marketwatch.com/story/yitzhak-rabins-little-known-economic-legacy-2015-10-29>

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² http://voices.washingtonpost.com/checkpoint-washington/2010/07/netanyahu_america_is_a_thing_y.html

¹²³ <http://edition.cnn.com/WORLD/9701/14/hebron.late/>

either side to move towards the milestones laid out in the agreement.¹²⁴ Due to the unpopularity of the Memorandum and the lack of support from the left, Netanyahu lost the prime ministry.

Beyond his talks with Arafat and the Palestinian Authority, Netanyahu also saw the breakdown of the peace agreement with Jordan. The breakdown was caused by Netanyahu's assassination of a Hamas leader in Jordan.¹²⁵ King Hussein was angry with Netanyahu for the attack on Jordanian soil and US pressure forced Netanyahu to give in to Hussein's demands.

Ehud Barak Labor; 1999-2001

Barak won the prime ministry after handily defeating Netanyahu. During his campaign, he promised to reestablish peace talks with Arafat. Barak followed through on his promise by signing an agreement in 1999 to transfer more land from territory that Israel occupied to the Palestinians.¹²⁶ He also resumed peace talks with Syria and withdrew troops from the south of Lebanon.¹²⁷ The following year saw the breakdown of peace between Israel and Palestine as fighting began along the borders of Gaza and the West Bank. His attempt to renegotiate for peace fell on deaf ears as he was ignored and was voted out of office following his call for a special election.¹²⁸

The prime ministers during this era made strong pushes for peace with their neighbors, resulting in peace agreements between Israel and Egypt and Israel and Jordan. The search for peace was also significant because it involved Israel negotiated with the PLO and Palestinian Authority for the first time.

V. The Prime Minister: 2001 – 2021

¹²⁴ Gellman, Barton (24 October 1998). "Netanyahu, Arafat Sign Accord; Talks Nearly Founder After Israel Demands Convicted Spy's Release". *The Washington Post*

¹²⁵ Eisenberg, p. 160.

¹²⁶ <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Ehud-Barak>

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*

¹²⁸ <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/ehud-barak>

Ariel Sharon Likud/Kadima; 2001-2006

Sharon handily ascended to the premiership following the special election called for by Barak.¹²⁹ His first act as prime minister was to begin a military operation called Defensive Shield and to begin building a barrier around the West Bank.¹³⁰ This was a direct response to the increased Israeli-Palestinian violence that began under Barak. The operation was largely successful in curtailing the fighting along the West Bank, but it did not stop the fighting completely.¹³¹

However, Sharon was not only interested in using military force to solve problems. Sharon believed that Palestinians have the right to establish their own land.¹³² Following the roadmap for peace laid out by the Bush administration, Sharon began a withdrawal from the Gaza Strip.¹³³ The decision to withdraw was approved of by the left wing and by the Palestinian Authority but was rebuked by his own party. However, the settlers in the region were displeased as they were forced to leave their homes and the settlements that were formerly occupied were destroyed by the Israeli government. There were protests within Likud regarding the disengagement, but the move was supported by the electorate.¹³⁴

Ehud Olmert Kadima; 2006-2009

Olmert initially became the prime minister due to a Sharon suffering a stroke that incapacitated his ability to hold the office. He was soon after selected to the premiership following the election and Kadima's status as the largest party in the Knesset.¹³⁵ Upon becoming

¹²⁹ <http://www.haaretz.com/news/national/1.546747>

¹³⁰ <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/operation-defensive-shield>

¹³¹ *Ibid.*

¹³² <http://www.haaretz.com/news/national/1.546747>

¹³³ <https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/06/20020624-3.html>

¹³⁴ <http://www.cnn.com/2004/WORLD/meast/12/09/israel.government/index.html>

¹³⁵ <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/ehud-olmert>

prime minister, Olmert began campaigning for a West Bank disengagement that would have seen Israel relinquish approximately 90% of the land to the Palestinians with the remaining land being incorporated into Israel.¹³⁶

Olmert's disengagement plan never came to fruition, however, because of the Second Lebanon War. While the war only lasted the summer, it was politically damaging to Olmert's standing in Israel and many people viewed his management of the war to be subpar due to the inability to recover their captured soldiers and the inability to destroy Hezbollah.¹³⁷ In the following years, Olmert attempted to restart peace talks, especially talks with the Mahmoud Abbas, the new head of the Palestinian Authority. He held numerous peace talks with Abbas over the course of two years. However, these talks did not lead to any result as Abbas continually rejected every plan.¹³⁸

Olmert attempted to resign in 2008, but his successor was unable to form a government, so Olmert remained as the prime minister until the 2009 elections. During his final year Olmert launched a ground attack against Gaza because of sustained rocket attacks.¹³⁹ After a brief battle, he declared an Israeli ceasefire in Gaza.

Benjamin Netanyahu Likud; 2009-Present

Netanyahu took over the premiership following elections in 2009. As is part of Likud's platform, Netanyahu continued to press the idea of a two-state solution. Following a meeting between Netanyahu and Obama, Netanyahu promised to cease building new settlements in the West Bank.

¹³⁶ Ibid.

¹³⁷ Ibid.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

Post 2001, the prime minister of Israel “can perhaps be perceived as first among unequals.”¹⁴⁰ This idea stems from the change in the selection of the prime minister in the early 1990s. While this change was temporary, the selection of the prime minister change from a Westminster style system to a direct election. The driving idea behind this change was to make the formation of a coalition government more streamlined by minimizing the political haggling that was involved.¹⁴¹ Since coalition governments are the political norm in Israel, the prime minister has less power than its British equivalent because each non-party minister is responsible to a different party. However, this decision was not looked upon kindly by the rest of the Knesset as the first direct election in 1996 saw both Labor and Likud lose seats and the Knesset itself to lose power.¹⁴²

The Knesset was felt to lose power because no longer was the prime minister necessarily being selected from one of the largest parties, only between the candidates who received the most votes. The presidentialization of the voting reduced the strength of party discipline as the prime minister could now no longer be removed by a vote of no confidence. It required the Knesset to then nominate the successor to the premiership as well.¹⁴³

In the post 2001 era, there was much more fighting and difficult achieving peace than in the previous era. While not easily attributable to only one action, the unrest caused by the American presence is likely a strong factor. The presence of the hardliner Netanyahu was also a big factor. His stance on working with Arab leaders was made clear by his criticisms of the US and Europe’s willingness to work with the Palestinian Authority as well as his own refusal to pursue peace like his predecessors.

¹⁴⁰ Mahler, 157.

¹⁴¹ Ibid, 159.

¹⁴² Ibid, 160.

¹⁴³ Ibid, 162.

V. *The Supreme Court*

The Supreme Court has had a large role in shaping Israeli politics and life in the past few decades – was mainly due to a shift in how the Court handled cases. Principally, it changed its guiding legal doctrine. By doing so, the Court greatly expanded its powers and the areas over which it had jurisdiction. While expanding its powers necessarily increased its power, it also changed Israeli society and how the other branches of government operated.

In the 1980s, the Supreme Court began to change its guiding doctrine. Originally, the Court operated under the "doctrine of standing."¹⁴⁴ This doctrine was double pronged in how the Court – as well as the legal system at large – operated. Under this doctrine, the Court would look at the actions of other governing bodies relative to their actions. If the bodies were found to have overstepped their legal boundaries, the Court would invalidate the new piece of legislation or regulation as unconstitutional. The substance of the legislation did not matter, only the reach. On the other hand, only people that would be directly affected by the legislation could bring forth a lawsuit to challenge the issue because only those people that could show "a personal, concrete interest" would have standing.¹⁴⁵ This was the Court's approach because it kept its powers limited to checking legal boundaries of the other branch of government.

However, beginning in the 1980s, the Court changed its approach to viewing decisions as well as reach. It shifted from the "doctrine of standing" to the "doctrine of justiciability."¹⁴⁶ At first, this change resulted in the Court being able to investigate a wider range of issues, such as those regarding controversial topics. This change enabled the Court to hear issues that more closely related to the everyday lives of the people. However, the new doctrine slowly increased

¹⁴⁴ Mautner, pg. 57

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid*

¹⁴⁶ Mautner, pg. 58

in scope until the Court determined that virtually every issue was justiciable. The Court's power extended to Knesset legislation, defense decisions, and Israel's international policy. For instance, the Court handed down rulings on issues such as the treatment of prisoners, the potential for private prisons, and the appointment of ministry heads, to name a few. This level of reach was unheard of, correlating with the Israeli Supreme Court being ranked as "the most daring" of all Supreme Courts in the world.¹⁴⁷ Additionally, this change in legal doctrine enabled people who previously would not have had standing on an issue to claim standing and bring new cases to the Court.

The doctrine of justiciability made Israeli society far more litigious. With the requirement of standing virtually removed, people could bring forth lawsuits that ranged from small issues (such as suing on behalf of another) all the way to grand issues (such as environmental ones).. This shift even brought Knesset members to the Court as "forces opposing government's actions will prevent it from carrying out its plan through petitions to the court."¹⁴⁸ This shift has proved to be problematic because it both circumvents the traditional function of politicking in the Knesset as well as giving the Court even more power by directly involving it in the legislative process. Since the Court was never intended to have this much power or reach, it was truly shocking that the Court moved in this direction – shift has so completely suffused Israeli society that Knesset members going to the Court was not unheard of.

This new ideology of the Supreme Court lasted until the early 2000s. While it was not solely due to then Chief Justice Aharon Barak, he was largely responsible for the push in the new direction. After he stepped down as chief justice, the Court made steps to return to its original doctrine because of public criticism. Even though the new range of the Court allowed it to rule in

¹⁴⁷ Mautner, pg. 55

¹⁴⁸ Shaked, "Path to Democracy and Justice"

ways that benefitted the environment and other groups, the Israeli public began to believe that its power had become excessive.

The change was also internally motivated by the remaining judges. Even while Barak was the chief justice, other justices often disagreed with the direction of the court or had different opinions on the ruling. The disagreement largely stemmed from the rapid change in the court's doctrine as it was not a change that slowly happened over decades, but a rapid shift that occurred in the span of a few years.

While walking its policies back was politically sound, it was likely due to internal pressures. The public did not approve of the Supreme Court being able to control the other branches of government. The regional unrest from the US' presence in the region was unlikely to have influenced the Supreme Court in a significant way.

VI. INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS METRICS

When it comes to international relations, the focus of this paper will be on relations with the Middle East and the United States, though Europe was, and continues to be, an important force for and aide to Israel. Due to the varying nature of the relationships and support from Europe to Israel, each state would need a variety of metrics to account for differences in style, longevity, and warmth of the relationship, among others.

The difficulty for this categorization can be shown in the differences between English and French relations. Israel's relationship with the United Kingdom has largely been negative outside of the past twenty years. The UK has historically had strong ties to Arab states. However, the UK was instrumental in Israel being able to be created because of the Belfour Declaration. On the other hand, France had been a strong ally and arms dealer until the Six-Day War, when

relations became strained. However, the ensuing decades found the two states to become allies again. Also, broadly, in terms of Euro-Israeli relations, Israel has not had much contact with eastern Europe save for the emigration of Russian Jews to Israel during its foundation.

I. Relations with United States

Israeli-American relations have been generally positive. The importance of this relationship is significant for Israel. For the US, the existence of Israel has allowed it to have a strategic foothold in the region with relative ease. The militaristic nature of the allyship between the two states began under the Kennedy administration, when the concept of a “special relationship” was introduced.¹⁴⁹ The special relationship continued from the Kennedy administration through subsequent administrations and has taken various forms with bidirectionality.

While the US codified into law the commitment to Israel’s qualitative military edge, the US also did not abandon the Arab states in the region nor was there an absence of tension.¹⁵⁰ In particular, the US during the Kennedy administration still gave aid to Saudi Arabia to prevent Soviet influence in the region. In the latter stages of the Kennedy administration, the US and USSR fought over Israel’s ability to achieve nuclear capability.¹⁵¹ The succeeding Nixon and Ford administrations did not achieve the same level of amicability between the US and Israel due to Israel’s involvement in the Yom Kippur War and the US’ forced role as a mediator for the conflict.

¹⁴⁹ Shannon, Vaughn P. (2003). *Balancing Act: US Foreign Policy and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*. Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing. p. 55

¹⁵⁰ The Washington Institute

¹⁵¹ Salt, p 201-3

However, the Carter administration helped broker a landmark agreement between Israel and Egypt with the Camp David Accords. The administration made strong pushes for peace in the Middle East. Carter's desire was aided by Egyptian President Sadat and Begin's own interests in finding peace for the betterment of their own states; Egypt looking to improve its flagging economy, Israel hoping an agreement with a neighbor would help with their Palestinian problem. Regardless of the reason, the talks that began between the two states eventually resulted in the creation of the *A Framework for the Conclusion of a Peace Treaty between Egypt and Israel*.¹⁵² This framework led to the signing of the Egypt-Israel peace treaty. Principally, the treaty meant that Egypt formally recognized Israel as a state, Israel agreed to return Sinai to Egypt, and trade opened between the two states. There was another framework that revolved around Palestinian independence, but this did not lead to anything fruitful.

Moving into the 1980s, the Reagan administration was largely pro-Israel. This relationship was aided by similarities the two shared about issues such as terrorism and Soviet containment. During his first term, the US and Israel formed the Joint Political Military Group to meet biannually to discuss ways of countering increasing Soviet activity.¹⁵³ However, Israel's proactive airstrike in Baghdad and the Lebanon War caused tension as the Reagan administration did not approve of offensive strikes. Later issues such as the talks between the US and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and Israel's rejection of a peace initiative added further tension between Israel and the US, but the 80s were largely positive as the US was more pro-Israel than in the past.

The 1990s began under trying conditions with the eruption of the Gulf War and Israel experiencing the First Intifada. Again, the United States criticized the offensive nature of Israel's

¹⁵² Office of the Historian, "The Oslo Accords"

¹⁵³ Jewish Virtual Library, "U.S.-Israel Strategic Cooperation"

armed conflict. The administration also criticized Israel's expansion of settlements in Palestinian territory. While it assisted Israel in forging a new relationship with Jordan and the accompanying peace treaty, the US was more hands off under this administration, acting more like a mediator than a manager. However, not all attempts to provide pressure to peace were successful as the talks for a peace between Israel and the PLO did not lead to another treaty or the withdrawal of Israel from the West Bank.¹⁵⁴ This time also saw the US increase aid given to Israel for militaristic purposes. While the Netanyahu government was the one in power during the second half of the 1990s, it lost power and was replaced with the Barak government after the talks with the PLO failed.

The US-Israel relationship between 1981 and 2001 was largely positive between the two powers. While there were periods of strain in the relationship, such as US criticism of Israel's aggression, this period saw the two states become closer and more entwined. The US increased the aid given to Israel and, particularly the Reagan administration, showed more favor for Israel than the Arab states. This is not to say that the US did not also exert its power over the smaller state. The US used its power to influence Israel's foreign policies in the direction of peace. Carter's role as a go between for Sadat and Begin speaks to the US' desire to see a change of policy both in Israel and the region.

The 2000s were a different story for the relationship between the two powers. The Bush administration continued the condemnation of Israel's settlement policy and released what came to be called the "Bush Roadmap." The Roadmap was intended to chart a path through which the Israeli-Palestinian conflict could be ended with the end goal being the creation of a stabilized Palestinian state.¹⁵⁵ As such, it approved of the Gaza Disengagement that saw Israel withdraw its

¹⁵⁴ Office of the Historian, "The Oslo Accords"

¹⁵⁵ Bureau of Public Affairs

peoples from the Gaza Strip and West Bank.¹⁵⁶ When armed conflict arose that Israel was involved in, the administration would pressure the Israeli government to withdraw from the area as quickly as possible from retaken areas in Palestinian territory and avoid aggressive tactics. This desire was seen though during the Lebanon War in which the US supported Israel through the offer to sell \$210 million in jet fuel to Israel because Lebanon was the aggressor.¹⁵⁷ However, when the administration was alerted to Israel's plans to bomb Iran's nuclear facilities, the US vetoed the plan.¹⁵⁸

The Obama administration did not see a relief of tension from the previous administration. As Netanyahu took power once again, the administration pressured Netanyahu's government toward the acceptance of a Palestinian state. Israel agreed to halt construction in the West Bank but continued to build in east Jerusalem, causing relations between the two governments to become further strained.¹⁵⁹ Talks between the two leaders reached a low point after the Obama administration issued a series of ultimatums to the Netanyahu government. While the two leaders did resume talks, the Obama administration again pushed for the idea of a roadmap that would lead to a two-state solution.¹⁶⁰

While the Obama administration continued the financial support to Israel, it halted the supply of missiles to Israel during the Israel-Gaza engagement.¹⁶¹ This decision caused another flare up of negative relations between the two states. Before the change of administration, the government abstained from a UN Security Council vote that called for the end of Israel's

¹⁵⁶ Jewish Virtual Library, "Gaza Disengagement Plan"

¹⁵⁷ Defense [Security Cooperation Agency](#)

¹⁵⁸ Steele

¹⁵⁹ BBC

¹⁶⁰ Ramirez

¹⁶¹ Newman

settlements in Palestinian territory.¹⁶² Although not the president, Secretary of State Kerry criticized Israel and its policies regarding settlement.¹⁶³ Netanyahu responded with criticisms of his own against the US and the UN's vote.¹⁶⁴

Moving into the Trump administration, relations between the two powers due to the new administration became markedly pro-Israel. The Netanyahu government announced that it would reverse its prior course of halting construction in east Jerusalem.¹⁶⁵ The Trump administration's strong Israeli preference was shown when it made the decision to move the embassy to Jerusalem. In the following year, the administration made the decision to recognize the Golan Heights as a part of Israel's territory; the first time a state other than Israel counted it as Israeli territory.¹⁶⁶

The pro-Israel stance of the latest administration was significant to Israel. While Israel had declared the Golan Heights as part of Israel, there was no external acknowledgement. The US acknowledging the Golan Heights confirms Israel's latest string of expansionist policy that was not present in the pre-2001 time. Additionally, the move movement of the American embassy shows that the US, at this time, has now chosen a side in the Israel-Palestine debate. By doing so, it will embolden Israel because the US will not allow Israel to become militarily inferior to its neighbors.

VII. CONCLUSION

¹⁶² United Nations Security Council Resolution 2334

¹⁶³ Sanger

¹⁶⁴ Ravid, "Netanyahu on UN Settlement Vote"

¹⁶⁵ Ravid, "Netanyahu Pledges Unrestricted Construction"

¹⁶⁶ Landler and Halbfinger

Between the two phases, there were marked changes in the economic, political system, governmental actions, and international relations of Israel. These changes were precipitated by 9/11 because it caused a large change on a global order. This shakeup meant that there were more opportunities for Israel to shift its positions than before. Additionally, while there were previously observable trends such as the party make-up of the Knesset, 9/11 caused a change in those trends.

Since 9/11, the relationship between the United States and Israel has been subject to more highs and lows than it was in the decades prior. Before 9/11, American support of the Israeli state was largely positive. There was bipartisan support for the aid given to Israel as well as support for increased aid for development of Israel's military, its weapon systems, or general economic aid. While the relationship between the two powers did experience periods of tension, this was not for a large portion of time relative to the length of the first phase. This relationship changed after 9/11 as support of Israel became polarized.

Even though the United States kept giving aid to Israel after 9/11 by honoring its previous agreement and extending it, it would be a mistake to believe that the relationship continued exactly as before. During parts of the Bush administration, there were tensions regarding a desire for a two-state solution. For large parts of the Obama administration, the relationship became cold, particularly after Netanyahu continued to build in east Jerusalem. However, the tension disappeared under the Trump administration and its markedly pro-Israel stance. Beyond the leadership, there have been calls within the US legislature for the reevaluation of the aid that is given to Israel and whether it continues to be necessary.

In the political realm, the effect of 9/11 can be seen in the shifts in seats in the Knesset. Since the 1977 political shift to the right that saw Likud become the leading party, there was a

notable increase in Likud seats in 2003. Likud doubled its seats from 19 in 1999 to 38 in 2003. This increase can be tied to the sharp increase in unrest in the region as back at that time the United States and others had invaded Iraq. The Likud party also saw itself move leftward toward center right from the far-right position it occupied at the beginning of the second phase before moving further right. The leftward move can be traced to growing dissatisfaction with the Likud government and the splitting off of Kadima by key Likud leadership. Aside from the parties, there were demonstrations against the Lebanon war as the populace signaled a desire for peace that did not seem as strong in the first phase such as when the Oslo Accord was not upheld.

The economic shape of Israel also changed during the post 9/11 era as the value of the technology sector rapidly increased in value and output. Between 1991 and 2000, the sector's exports increased by \$9 billion from \$3 to \$12 billion. Since then, the exports reached \$21 billion in 2007, \$30 billion in 2011, and \$39 billion in 2016. The rate of growth in the tech sector can be traced to 9/11 because the technology sector has its origins in the military. Many of Israel's first technologies were developed for the military and then repurposed for the public. As a result, Israel's high defense spending continued to support the technology sector and was a response to the unrest in the region due to wars and the rise of ISIS.

While 9/11 itself was not the sole reason for these changes, it can be seen as a catalyst for the other events that it spawned. It is unlikely that ISIS would have been able to gain the strength and following that it did without the war declared on Iraq. Without the war in Iraq, there would not have been subsequent wars in Syria and Afghanistan. From these events, more unrest spread through the region. The surrounding unrest by known hostile states caused the U.S.-Israel relationship to increase in terms of aid given, allowing Israel to develop faster than it would have without the increase. Israel was also supported by American policy that will not allow Israel to

become militarily inferior to its Arabic neighbors. The US response to 9/11 was also significant because the US needed a place in the region that it could safely harbor its forces, making the existence of Israel important to the American presence in the region.

Appendix

Knesset Party	10 1981	11 1984	12 1988	13 1992	14 1996	15 1999	16 2003	17 2006	18 2009	19 2013	20 2015	21 Early 2019	22 Late 2019	23 2020
Likud	48	41	40	32		19	38	12			30	35	32	36
Blue and White												35	33	33
Joint List											13		13	15
Shas		4	6	6	10	17	11	12	11	11	7	8	9	9
United Torah Judaism				4	4	5	5	6	5	7	6	8	7	7
Labor-Gesher-Meretz													6	7
Yisrael Beiteinu						4		11	15		6	5	8	7
Yamina													7	6
Democratic Union													5	
Hadash-Ta'al							3						6	
Labor				44	34		19	19	13	15			6	
URWP													5	
Meretz				12	9	10	6	5	3	6	5	4	4	
Kulanu											10	4	4	
Ra'am-Bao													4	
Zionist Union											24			
Yesh Atid										19	11			
The Jewish Home										12	8			
Likud Yisrael Beiteinu										31				
Hatnua											6			
United Arab List						5	2				4			
Hadash	4	4	4	3		3		3	4	4				
Balad						2	3	3	3	3				
Kadima								29	28	2				
Likud-Ahi									27					
Ra'am-Ta'al								4	4					
National Union						4	7		4					
Jewish Home-New Mafdal									3					
National Union-National Religious Party								9						
Gil								7						
Shinui	2	3	2			6	15							
Mafdal	6	4	5	6	9	5	6							
One Nation						2	3							
Yisrael BaAliyah					7	6	2							
One Israel						26								
Centre Party						6								
Likud-Gesher-Tzomet					32									
Hadash-Balad					5									
Third Way					4									
Ra'am-Mada					4									
Moledet			2	3	2									
Tzomet			2	8										
Mada			1	2										
Alignment	47	44	39											
Agudat Yisrael	4	2	5											
Ratz	1	3	5											
Tehiya	3		3											
Mapam			3											
Degel HaTorah			2											
PLFP		2	1											
Tehiya-Tzomet		5												
Yahad		3												
Morasha		2												
Tami	3	1												
Kach		1												
Ometz		1												
Telem	2													
	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120

Table 4: List of seats in the Knesset

	Israel	Arab World	European Union	United States	Global
1981	5.340	2.910	0.502	2.538	1.922
1982	2.082	-9.080	0.816	-1.803	0.432
1983	3.359	-6.841	1.441	4.584	2.413
1984	0.933	1.356	2.485	7.237	4.502
1985	4.037	-2.294	2.351	4.170	3.711
1986	4.190	4.710	2.586	3.463	3.399
1987	7.140	-0.496	2.527	3.460	3.709
1988	2.910	5.603	4.169	4.177	4.619
1989	0.575	2.358	3.924	3.673	3.678
1990	7.315	13.112	3.370	1.886	2.916
1991	7.726	1.514	1.809	-0.108	1.428
1992	7.759	4.982	1.147	3.522	1.768
1993	4.117	3.271	-0.566	2.753	1.529
1994	7.428	3.198	2.654	4.029	3.000
1995	6.603	2.755	2.664	2.684	3.022
1996	5.033	4.596	1.894	3.773	3.389
1997	3.930	4.240	2.663	4.447	3.674
1998	3.917	5.266	3.019	4.481	2.556
1999	3.115	1.790	2.961	4.753	3.248
2000	7.455	5.460	3.904	4.127	4.385
2001	0.119	1.571	2.189	0.998	1.960
2002	-0.015	0.584	1.123	1.742	2.182
2003	0.970	5.332	0.928	2.861	2.964
2004	4.186	9.322	2.603	3.799	4.407
2005	3.912	5.750	1.930	3.513	3.915
2006	5.564	6.502	3.495	2.855	4.380
2007	5.773	4.552	3.154	1.876	4.324
2008	2.996	5.809	0.646	-0.137	1.853
2009	0.924	0.425	-4.330	-2.537	-1.674
2010	5.601	4.642	2.195	2.564	4.301
2011	4.783	3.816	1.840	1.551	3.140
2012	2.257	6.590	-0.743	2.250	2.517
2013	4.148	3.184	-0.058	1.842	2.663
2014	3.758	2.447	1.582	2.452	2.847
2015	2.290	3.174	2.357	2.881	2.879
2016	3.982	3.422	2.050	1.567	2.592
2017	3.537	1.137	2.726	2.217	3.262
2018	3.454	2.090	2.147	3.184	3.098
2019	3.514	1.478	1.523	2.334	2.475

Bibliography

1. American Jewish Population Project. *US Jewish Population Estimates 2020*, Steinhardt Social Research Institute, 2020, ajpp.brandeis.edu/us_jewish_population_2020.
2. AP. "3 Israeli Terrorists Are Released In 4th Reduction of Their Terms." *The New York Times*, 27 Dec. 1990. *NYTimes.com*, <https://www.nytimes.com/1990/12/27/world/3-israeli-terrorists-are-released-in-4th-reduction-of-their-terms.html>.
3. BBC. "US-Israel Row: Israeli Views." *BBC News*, BBC, 24 Mar. 2010, news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/8585239.stm.
4. Beinun, Joel. "The 2006 Lebanon War and the Israeli Peace Forces." *Center For Defense and Security Policy*, Wilberforce University, 2006, www.wilberforce.edu/cdsp/cdsp_art1_1.html.
5. Bresnahan, Timothy F., and Gambardella, Alfonso. *Building High-Tech Clusters: Silicon Valley and Beyond*. Cambridge University Press, 2004.
6. Bureau of Public Affairs. "Roadmap for Peace in the Middle East: Israeli/Palestinian Reciprocal Action, Quartet Support." *U.S. Department of State*, U.S. Department of State, 16 July 2003, 2001-2009.state.gov/r/pa/ei/rls/22520.htm.
7. DellaPergola, Sergio. "World Jewish Population, 2018." *American Jewish Year Book 2018*, Springer International Publishing, Cham, 2019, pp. 361–449. *American Jewish Year Book*.
8. Defense Security Cooperation Agency. "Israel- JP-8 Aviation Jet Fuel." [Http://Www.dsca.mil](http://www.dsca.mil), Department of Defense Security Cooperation Agency, 14 July 2006, web.archive.org/web/20090327050219/www.dsca.mil/PressReleases/36-b/2006/Israel_06-40.pdf.
9. Dery, David. *Data and Policy Change: The Fragility of Data in the Policy Context*. Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1990.

10. East, Roger, et al. *Profiles of People in Power*. Taylor & Francis Group, 2003.
11. Eisenberg, Laura Zittrain., and Caplan, Neil. *Negotiating Arab-Israeli Peace: Patterns, Problems, Possibilities*. 2nd ed., Indiana University Press, 2010.
12. Friedberg, Dr. Chen, et al. "6,644 Bills, 5,756 Queries: Was 20th Knesset a Tale of Quantity over Quality?" *The Times of Israel*, The Times of Israel, 19 Apr. 2019, www.timesofisrael.com/6644-bills-5756-queries-was-20th-knesset-a-tale-of-quantity-over-quality/.
13. Ghanem, As'ad, et al. Questioning "Ethnic Democracy": A Response to Sammy Smooha. *Israel Studies (Bloomington, Ind.)*, vol. 3, no. 2, 1998, pp. 253–267.
14. Glozman, Masha Zur. "The Million Russians That Changed Israel to Its Core." *Haaretz.com*, Haaretz, 4 Jan. 2013, www.haaretz.com/.premium-the-million-russians-who-changed-israel-1.5287944.
15. Harms, Gregory, and Ferry, Todd M. *The Palestine-Israel Conflict: A Basic Introduction*. Third ed., Pluto Press, 2012.
16. IPU Parline. "Parliaments at a Glance: Structure." *IPU PARLINE Database: Structure of Parliaments*, IPU PARLINE, Sept. 2018, archive.ipu.org/parline-e/ParliamentsStructure.asp?REGION=All&LANG=ENG.
17. Israel Central Bureau of Statistics. *Total Immigration to Israel from the Former Soviet Union*, Jewish Virtual Library, 2018, www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/total-immigration-to-israel-from-former-soviet-union.
18. Israel Democracy Institute. "Why Are There So Many Parties, and Is There Anything Wrong with That?" *The Times of Israel*, The Times of Israel, 27 Jan. 2019,

www.timesofisrael.com/why-are-there-so-many-parties-and-is-there-anything-wrong-with-that/.

19. Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs. "ECONOMY: Sectors of the Israeli Economy." *Mfa.gov.il*, Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2006, mfa.gov.il/mfa/aboutisrael/economy/pages/economy-%20sectors%20of%20the%20economy.aspx.
20. Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs. "FOCUS on Israel: The Knesset." *Mfa.gov.il*, Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1999, mfa.gov.il/MFA/MFA-Archive/1999/Pages/FOCUS%20on%20Israel-%20The%20Knesset.aspx.
21. Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs. "THE STATE: Executive: The Government." *Mfa.gov.il*, Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2013, mfa.gov.il/MFA/AboutIsrael/State/Pages/THE%20STATE-%20Executive-%20The%20Government.aspx.
22. Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs. "THE STATE: Judiciary: The Court System." *Mfa.gov.il*, Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, mfa.gov.il/MFA/AboutIsrael/State/Pages/THE%20STATE-%20Judiciary-%20The%20Court%20System.aspx.
23. Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs. "THE STATE: The Presidency." *Mfa.gov.il*, Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2013, mfa.gov.il/MFA/AboutIsrael/State/Pages/THE%20STATE-%20The%20Presidency.aspx.
24. Jewish Virtual Library. "Gaza Disengagement Plan: Knesset Approves Disengagement Implementation Law." *Knesset Approves Disengagement Implementation Law (February*

- 2005), Jewish Virtual Library, 16 Feb. 2005, www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/knesset-approves-disengagement-implementation-law-february-2005.
25. Jewish Virtual Library. "Parties Running and Winning Knesset Seats." *Jewish Virtual Library*, Jewish Virtual Library, 2021, www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/parties-running-and-winning-knesset-seats.
26. Jewish Virtual Library. "U.S.-Israel Strategic Cooperation: Evolution of Strategic Alliance." *Evolution of US-Israel Strategic Alliance* | *Jewish Virtual Library*, Jewish Virtual Library, 2010, www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/evolution-of-us-israel-strategic-alliance-jewish-virtual-library.
27. Kunz, Diane B. *The Economic Diplomacy of the Suez Crisis*. University of North Carolina Press, 1991.
28. Laakso, Markku, and Rein Taagepera. "'Effective' Number of Parties: A Measure with Application to West Europe." *Comparative Political Studies*, vol. 12, no. 1, Apr. 1979, pp. 3–27.
29. Landler, Mark, and David M. Halbfinger. "Trump, With Netanyahu, Formally Recognizes Israel's Authority Over Golan Heights." *The New York Times*, The New York Times, 25 Mar. 2019, www.nytimes.com/2019/03/25/us/politics/benjamin-netanyahu-donald-trump-meeting.html.
30. Lazin, Frederick A. *Policy Implementation of Social Welfare in the 1980s*. Transaction Books, 1987.
31. Lipka, Michael. "The Continuing Decline of Europe's Jewish Population." *Pew Research Center*, Pew Research Center, 31 May 2020, www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2015/02/09/europes-jewish-population/.

32. Lis, Jonathan. "Israel's Last Knesset Had Record-Breaking Number of Bills Passed."
Haaretz.com, Haaretz, 29 Apr. 2019, www.haaretz.com/israel-news/.premium-israel-s-last-knesset-had-record-breaking-number-of-bills-passed-1.7182050.
33. Mahler, Gregory S. *Politics and Government in Israel: The Maturation of a Modern State*. Third ed., Rowman & Littlefield, 2016.
34. Newman, Marissa. "Israeli Official Confirms US Nixed Arms Shipment; Poles Argue over Who's to Blame." *Israeli Official Confirms US Nixed Arms Shipment; Poles Argue over Who's to Blame | The Times of Israel*, The Times of Israel, 14 Aug. 2014, www.timesofisrael.com/israeli-official-confirms-us-nixed-missile-sale-pm-blamed-for-soured-ties/amp/.
35. Newman, Marissa. "Likud Okays Merger with Kulanu, Confirms Netanyahu as PM Candidate." *The Times of Israel*, The Times of Israel, 28 May 2019, www.timesofisrael.com/likud-okays-merger-with-kulanu-confirms-netanyahu-as-pm-candidate/.
36. Office of the Historian. "The Oslo Accords and the Arab-Israeli Peace Process." *U.S. Department of State*, U.S. Department of State, 2001, history.state.gov/milestones/1993-2000/oslo#:~:text=On%20September%2013%2C%201993%2C%20Israeli,%2C%E2%80%9D%20at%20the%20White%20House.
37. Ong, Michael. "Israel's May 1999 Elections and the Prospects for Peace in the Middle East." *Home – Parliament of Australia*, Parliament of Australia, 18 Feb. 2013, www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Parliamentary_Departments/Parliamentary_Library/Publications_Archive/CIB/cib9899/99cib15.

38. Padilla, Steve, and Ronald L. Soble. "Herzog Calls Iraq a Nest of Terrorism: Mideast: The Israeli President, Visiting Los Angeles, Says That the Danger Posed by Saddam Hussein Must Be Neutralized." *Los Angeles Times*, 19 Nov. 1990, <https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-1990-11-19-me-3542-story.html>
39. Ramirez, Luis. "Israel Objects to Obama Remarks on Borders." *Israel Objects to Obama Remarks on Borders / Middle East / English*, Voice of America News, 19 May 2011, web.archive.org/web/20110528162058/www.voanews.com/english/news/middle-east/Israel-Objects-to-Obama-Remarks-on-Borders-122267399.html.
40. Ravid, Barak. "Netanyahu on UN Settlement Vote: Israel Will Not Turn the Other Cheek." *Haaretz.com*, Haaretz, 26 Dec. 2016, www.haaretz.com/israel-news/netanyahu-on-un-vote-israel-will-not-turn-the-other-cheek-1.5478612.
41. Ravid, Barak. "Netanyahu Pledges Unrestricted Construction in East Jerusalem, Settlement Blocs." *Haaretz.com*, Haaretz, 22 Jan. 2017, www.haaretz.com/israel-news/.premium-netanyahu-vows-unrestricted-east-j-lem-settlement-construction-1.5489217.
42. Robinson, Glenn E. *Global Jihad: A Brief History*. Stanford University Press, 2021.
43. Ronen, Gil. "Knesset Passes Governance Law." *Israel National News*, Israel National News, 11 Mar. 2014, www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/178361#.UyDRtvm1ZcQ.
44. Salt, Jeremy. *The Unmaking of the Middle East: A History of Western Disorder in Arab Lands*. University of California Press, 2008.
45. Sanger, David E. "Kerry Rebukes Israel, Calling Settlements a Threat to Peace." *The New York Times*, The New York Times, 28 Dec. 2016, www.nytimes.com/2016/12/28/us/politics/john-kerry-israel-palestine-peace.html.

46. Shafir, Gershon. *A Half Century of Occupation: Israel, Palestine, and the World's Most Intractable Conflict*. University of California Press, 2017.
47. Shapira, Anita. *Israel: A History*. Brandeis University Press, 2012.
48. Shipman, Tim. "Obama Ready to Press Israeli Parties to Form Unity Government." *The Telegraph*, Telegraph Media Group, 14 Feb. 2009, www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/israel/4621452/Obama-ready-to-press-Israeli-parties-to-form-unity-government.html.
49. Steele, Jonathan. "Israel Asked US for Green Light to Bomb Nuclear Sites in Iran." *The Guardian*, Guardian News and Media, 25 Sept. 2008, www.theguardian.com/world/2008/sep/25/iran.israelandthepalestinians1.
50. Taub, Gadi. *The Settlers and the Struggle over the Meaning of Zionism*. Yale University Press, 2010.
51. The Washington Institute. "U.S. Foreign Policy and Israel's Qualitative Military Edge: The Need for a Common Vision." *The Washington Institute*, The Washington Institute, 24 Jan. 2008, www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/us-foreign-policy-and-israels-qualitative-military-edge-need-common-vision.
52. TOI Staff. "Here We Go Again: ToI's Guide to the 37 Parties Still Seeking Your Vote." *The Times of Israel*, The Times of Israel, 22 Mar. 2021, www.timesofisrael.com/here-we-go-again-tois-guide-to-the-38-parties-still-seeking-your-vote/.
53. Torreon, Barbara Salazar (2017). U.S. Periods of War and Dates of Recent Conflicts (PDF). Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service.
54. Vause, John, et al. "Sharon Shakes up Israeli Politics." *CNN*, Cable News Network, 22 Nov. 2005, www.cnn.com/2005/WORLD/meast/11/21/israel.politics/.

55. Ziv, Guy. "Shimon Peres and the French-Israeli Alliance, 1954–9." *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol. 45, no. 2, Apr. 2010, pp. 406–429, doi:10.1177/0022009409356915.