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Palestinian Center for
POLICY and
SURVEY RESEARCH

Joint Palestinian-Israeli Surveys on Trust and the Peace Process: *Palestinian Report*



May 2021

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Palestinian-Israeli Joint Poll on Trust and Peace Process:

MAPPING SOURCES OF MUTUAL DISTRUST IN PALESTINIAN-ISRAELI RELATIONS:

Role of education, daily life experiences, and exposure to violence

These are the results of two Palestinian-Israeli joint surveys on trust and the peace process: A Joint Poll conducted by the [Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research \(PSR\)](#) in Ramallah and the MACRO center in Tel Aviv and with funding from the [European Union \(EU\)](#) in October 2020 and an earlier (August 2020) joint poll on the peace process, the Palestinian-Israeli Pulse, conducted by PSR and [the Evens Program in Mediation and Conflict Management at Tel Aviv University](#) with funding from the Netherlands Representative Office in Ramallah and the Representative Office of Japan to Palestine through UNDP/PAPP.

This report is divided into four sections. **The first section** describes the **methodology** of the joint research. **The second section** examines the relationship between two variables: **trust and support for peace**. In this section, support for peace is treated as the dependent variable and trust is treated as the independent variable. Two composite indicators, each developed from the findings of various related questions designed for that purpose, are explored here. The section also highlights findings based on demographic variables, particularly age, in order to understand the attitudes of the youth. **The third section** describes the findings regarding three components that are believed to influence the level of trust in both societies: (1) daily life hardships, (2) exposure to violence, and (3) perception of education. Here too we use the data to build a quantitative composite indicator for each of these suspected sources of distrust. The section examines the relationship between the three components and trust in which these elements are treated as independent variables and trust as a dependent variable. **The fourth section** serves as a conclusion with policy implications driven by the findings.

(1) Methodology:

The Palestinian-Israeli Pulse: The Palestinian sample size was 1200 adults interviewed face-to-face in the West Bank, East Jerusalem and Gaza Strip in 127 randomly selected locations between 12-26 August, 2020. The margin of error is +/-3%. The Israeli sample includes 900 adult Israelis interviewed through the internet by Midgam in Hebrew and Arabic 12 August and 3 September 2020. The number of Jews interviewed inside Israel is 500, 200 West Bank settlers, and 200 Israeli Arabs. The combined Israeli data file has been reweighted to reflect the exact proportionate size of these three groups in the Israeli society, and to reflect current demographic and religious-secular divisions. The margin of error is +/-3.34%.

The joint poll on trust and the peace process: The Palestinian sample size was 1560 adults, including 592 youth, interviewed face-to-face in the West Bank, East Jerusalem and Gaza Strip in 120 randomly

selected locations between 29 October to 1 November, 2020. The margin of error is +/-3%. The Israeli sample includes 1201 adult Israelis interviewed through the internet by Rafi Smith in Hebrew and Arabic on 12 August and 3 November 2020. The number of Jews interviewed is 1020 (of which 272 were youth) and Israeli Arabs 181 (of which 50 were youth). The combined Israeli and Palestinian data files have been reweighted to reflect the exact proportionate size of the various groups and ages in the Palestinian and Israeli societies, and to reflect, for Israeli Jews, current demographic and religious-secular divisions. The margin of error for the Israeli poll is +/-3.34%.

Role of education, daily life experiences, and exposure to violence

PALESTINIAN REPORT

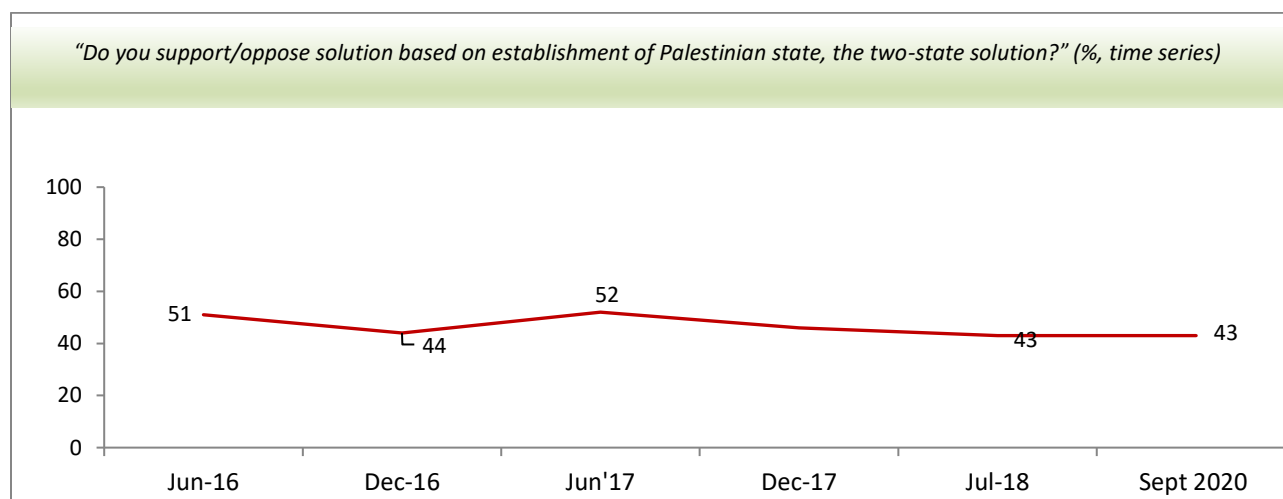
MAPPING SOURCES OF MUTUAL DISTRUST IN PALESTINIAN-ISRAELI RELATIONS:

(2) Trust and support for the peace process

In this section, we highlight the findings regarding attitudes on the peace process and the level of prevailing trust on the other side:

The Peace Process: In the August and October surveys, we asked about support for the two-state solution: 43% of Palestinians supported the concept of the two-state solution in August; 56% were opposed. In October, the question was modified with respondents having the option of selecting a middle position: neither support nor oppose. In this case, support stood at 25% only and opposition at 63%; 11% selected the middle position. In both cases, only the general principle was provided. As seen in Figure (1), Palestinian support has varied during the past five years: it fell from June to December 2016, when 44% supported the basic two-state solution in principle, rose to 52% in June 2017, then declined once again to 46% and continued to decline in July 2018 and in September 2020.

Figure (1): Support for the concept of the two-state solution among Palestinians (2016-20)



In addition to attitudes regarding the two-state solution, we examined attitudes regarding a related topic: violence vs. diplomacy. In August and October, we asked Palestinians about four possible options regarding what should happen next in Palestinian-Israeli relations. The August findings showed a significant difference between West Bankers and Gazans: West Bankers preferred to

“reach a peace agreement” with the other side (49%). But the preference for this outcome declined to 13% among Gazans. Total Palestinian preference for a peace agreement stood at 34%. In October, only 29% of Palestinians selected the option of reaching a peace agreement: 37% in the West Bank and 16% in the Gaza Strip.

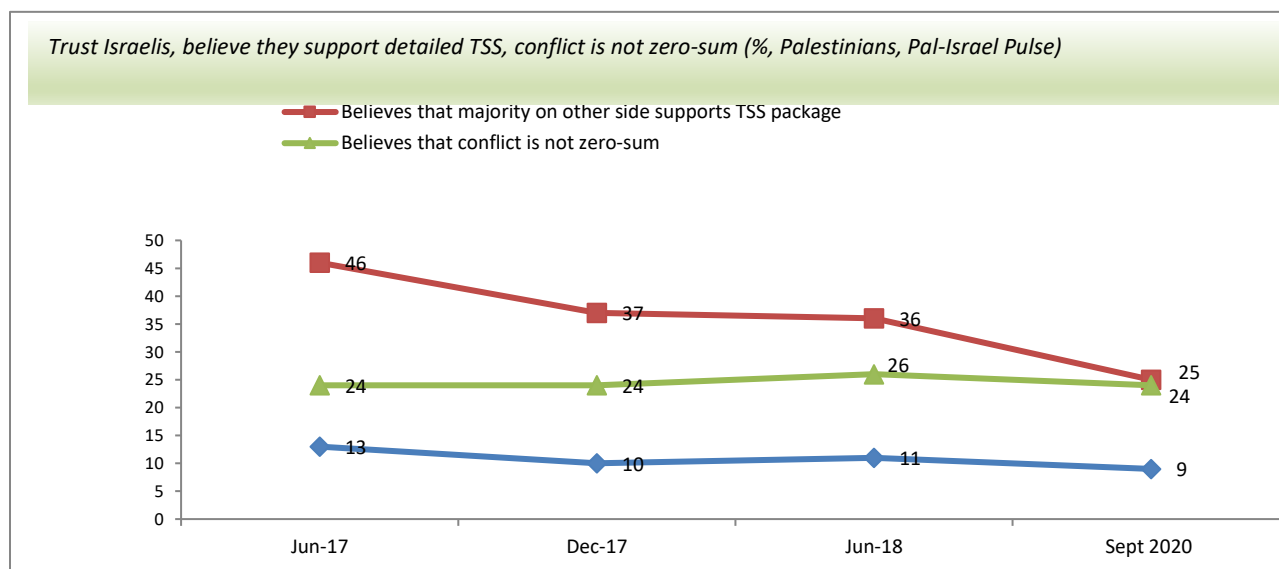
Overall Palestinian preference for a second option, “waging an armed struggle,” stood at 37% (26% in the West Bank and 54% in the Gaza Strip). In October, this option received similar support among Palestinians (35%). “Waging an unarmed resistance,” was chosen by 10% of the Palestinians in August, and 12% in October. Finally, in August, 13% of the Palestinians chose “maintain the status quo.” The October findings show a little increase in favor of the status quo to 18%. Also in October, in an answer to a question regarding the view that only “armed struggle” can end the occupation, 63% expressed agreement with that view; only 23% disagreed.

Trust: Findings of our two joint surveys indicate that the levels of trust in the other side are very low and distrust is overriding. Among Palestinians a solid majority feels Israeli Jews are untrustworthy (90% - almost identical to a June 2018 finding), see figure (2) below.

When asked why they do not trust the other side, Palestinians focused on the political goals of Israeli Jews (42%) and on their religion and culture (24%). Other factors picked by Palestinians were the Israeli leadership (16%), negative personal experiences (10%), and incitement in the Israeli educational system (5%).

Distrust is reinforced by a prevailing perception that the Palestinian-Israeli conflict is characterized by zero-sum relations: “Nothing can be done that’s good for both sides; whatever is good for one side is bad for the other side.” Findings show that 74% of Palestinians (compared to 71% in July 2018) agree with this dismal zero-sum characterization.

Figure (2): Palestinian perceptions of the other, 2017-2020



We asked Palestinian respondents about perceptions of the other and themselves: whether they want peace or believe the other side does, whether they trust and whether they fear the other side. We probed the extent of zero-sum beliefs. The overall findings show a marked decline in perceptions of the other side’s commitment to peace and in the level of trust. We asked more detailed questions about the potential antecedents of (mis)trust and how various social actors

contribute to it. These assessments were already majority negative in our joint Palestinian-Israeli 2016-2018 polling series, but in 2020, mutual perceptions have sunk even lower.

In August 2020, 18% of the Palestinians agreed that most Israeli Jews want peace, a significant decrease from 39% in June 2018 and much less than our findings in June 2017 when 44% of Palestinians gave this response. More than three quarters (76%) expressed the view that they do not think most Israeli Jews want peace. In October, the question allowed for a middle choice: “neither agree nor disagree.” In this version of the question, only 10% agreed with the statement that Israeli Jews want peace, 78% disagreed, and 10% selected the middle choice.

When asked in October about the significance of Israeli continued settlement construction, an overwhelming majority of 87% said it clearly demonstrate that Israel’s goal is to perpetuate its control over the Palestinians. A similar percentage, 83%, said that Israel’s rejection of Palestinian peace efforts is a proof that its ultimate goal is to expel the Palestinians from their homeland. When asked to speculate about Israel’s long-term aspirations, 59% said in October that it wants to extend its state to cover the entire area between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea and expel the Palestinians. Another 25% said it want to annex the Palestinian territories and deny the Palestinians their rights. Also in October, the overwhelming majority of the Palestinians (91%) thought that if a peace agreement is reached, Israel will not respect it; only 3% believed Israel would implement its commitment under such a peace agreement.

The answers to these and many other sets of questions regarding the other side's perceptions and actions are strong potential antecedents of mistrust: Palestinians believe that the other side does not want peace and that the other side’s education system is biased against them. Naturally, all of these perceptions could contribute to low levels of trust.

Building peace and trust indicators: For the analysis in this section, we have developed quantitative indicators for the two variables, trust and peace. For trust, the building of the indicator went through three steps: the first step was to build an indicator based on measuring direct questions about willingness to trust the other side. The second step was based on a set of indirect questions about trust. In the third step, we combined the two indicators into one. Although we have tested all three, the one based on the combined measures has been used throughout this report. As for our main dependent variable, support for peace, only one indicator has been developed. Peace is defined in term of an agreement based on a two-state solution and associated compromises as well as expression of attitudes consistent with that solution. For the indicators of peace and trust, three levels were developed: high, medium, and low, see the following box for details on the building of the two indicators.

Building indicators of peace and trust

Peace Indicator, October 2020:	Peace Indicator, August 2020:
The <i>October 2020</i> indicator for peace has three levels, assuming the following values: Low: from less than 0 to 0.39 Medium: from 0.40 to 0.59 High: from 0.60 to 1.2	The <i>August 2020</i> indicator for peace has three levels, assuming the following values: Low: from less than 0 to 0.39 Medium: from 0.40 to 0.59 High: from 0.60 to 1.2

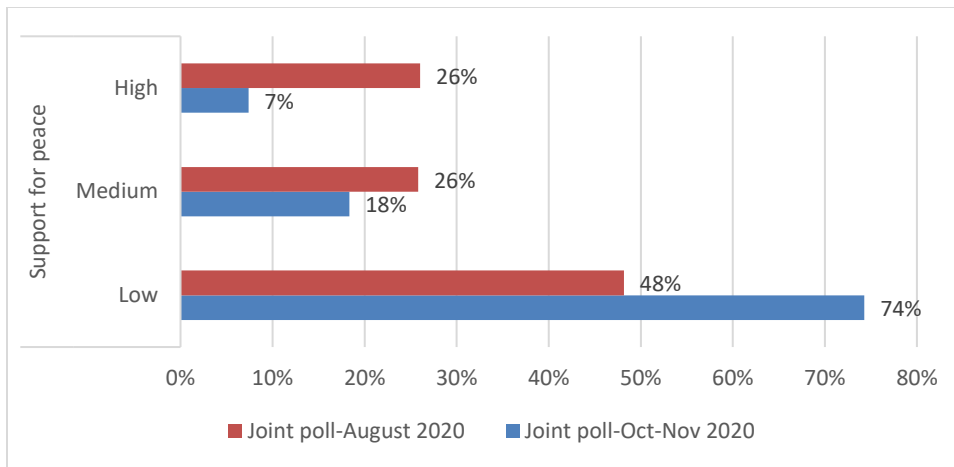
<p>The indicator represented the average sum of support/opposition, agree/disagree in the following 13 variables:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The solution based on the establishment of a Palestinian state alongside Israel, known as the two-state solution 2. Role of armed struggle in ending the occupation 3. Palestinians and Israelis are just as much victims of the conflict as the other side 4. The Palestinian need for a state does not contradict the right of the Jews for their own state 5. It is possible to find among the Jews/Palestinians a moderate segment that wants to end the conflict. 6. Views on the long-term aspirations of Israel 7. If Palestinians reject the two-state solution, they risk coming under Israeli sovereignty but without having equal rights to Israeli Jews. 8. Preference for what should happen next in Israeli-Palestinian relations 9. Beliefs regarding the preferences of the Israelis on what should happen next 10. Willingness to exchange views and information with Israeli sources regarding the conflict 11. Readiness to hear Israeli sources and receive new information about the conflict 12. Having a friend on the other side 13. Wanting to have an Israeli friend 	<p>The indicator represented the average sum of support/opposition, agree/disagree in the following 4 variables:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The solution based on the establishment of a Palestinian state alongside Israel, known as the two-state solution 2. A detailed peace package that addresses all aspects of the conflict 3. Belief in the zero sum dynamics: nothing can be done that's good for both sides, whatever is good for one side is bad for the other side 4. The belief that the conflict can be resolved peacefully
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<p>Trust Indicator, October 2020</p> <p>The <i>October 2020</i> poll has three trust indicators and each has three levels, assuming the following values: Low: from less than 0 to 0.14 Medium: from 0.15 to 0.49 High: from 0.50 to 1.2</p> <p><i>Trust indicator #1</i> represented the average sum of support/opposition, agree/disagree in the following 3</p>	<p>Trust Indicator, August 2020</p> <p>The <i>August 2020</i> poll has three trust indicators, trust #1 indicator has two level while the others have three levels. <i>Indicator #1</i> had two values: assuming the following values: Low: from 0.0 to less than 0.0 High: from 0.80 to 1.2 <i>Indicators #1 and #2</i> assume three values:</p>
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<p>variables; all representing direct questions about perception of trust:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Possibility of trusting Israeli Jews 2. Possibility to trust Israeli leaders 3. View on possibility for Palestinian and Israeli Jews to build trustful relationship in principle <p><i>Trust indicator #2</i> represented the average sum of support/opposition, agree/disagree in the following 12 variables; all representing indirect questions about trust:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That continued Israeli settlement construction in the occupied Palestinian territories shows clearly that Israel desire to subjugate the Palestinians and never end its occupation 2. Time after time Israel rejected the Palestinian offer of the peace of the brave because their ultimate desire is to expel the Palestinians and take away their land 3. Belief that Israelis are peaceful 4. Belief that Israelis are violent. 5. Expression of feelings of anger towards Israeli Jews 6. Expression of feelings of hatred towards Israeli Jews 7. Expression of feelings of empathy towards Israeli Jews 8. Expression of feelings of Compassion towards Israeli Jews 9. Belief that the Israeli leadership would honor its commitment in a peace agreement 10. Belief in the peaceful intentions of Israeli Jews. 11. Belief that it is impossible to reach a peace agreement with Israelis because there is no partner on the other side 12. Belief that Israelis will never accept the existence of a state for the Palestinian people and will strive to annihilate it if they can <p><i>Trust indicator #3</i> represented the average sum of indicators #1 and #2, representing the direct and indirect questions about perception of trust.</p>	<p>Low: from less than 0 to 0.14 Medium: from 0.15 to 0.49 High: from 0.50 to 1.2</p> <p><i>Trust indicator #1</i> represented the average sum of support/opposition, agree/disagree in the following single variable; representing a direct question about perception of trust:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Possibility of trusting Israeli Jews <p><i>Trust indicator #2</i> represented the average sum of support/opposition, agree/disagree in the following 4 variables; all representing indirect questions about trust:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Belief in the peaceful intentions of Jews/Israelis 2. Belief there is a partner on the other side 3. Belief regarding Israelis' willingness to accept the existence of a Palestinian state 4. Belief regarding Israelis willingness to honor commitments in peace agreement <p><i>Trust indicator #3</i> represented the average sum of indicators #1 and #2, representing the direct and indirect questions about perception of trust.</p>
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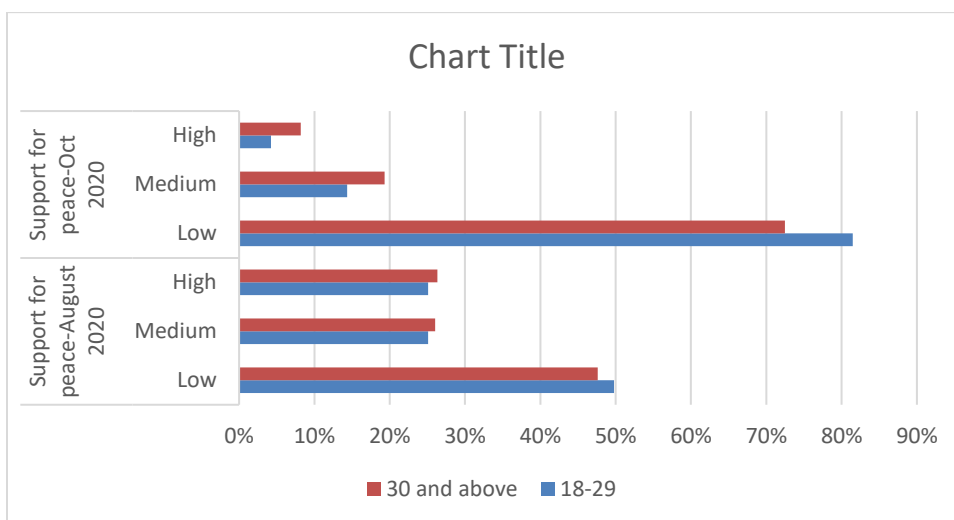
The indicators' building exercise produced the following findings. As figure (3) below indicates, support for peace (peace indicator) is predominantly low in the two joint polls, but most significantly in the October poll, when an expanded set of 13 questions were used to build this peace indicator while only four were used to build the August indicator.

Figure (3): Level of support for peace: three levels, two joint polls (August and October 2020)



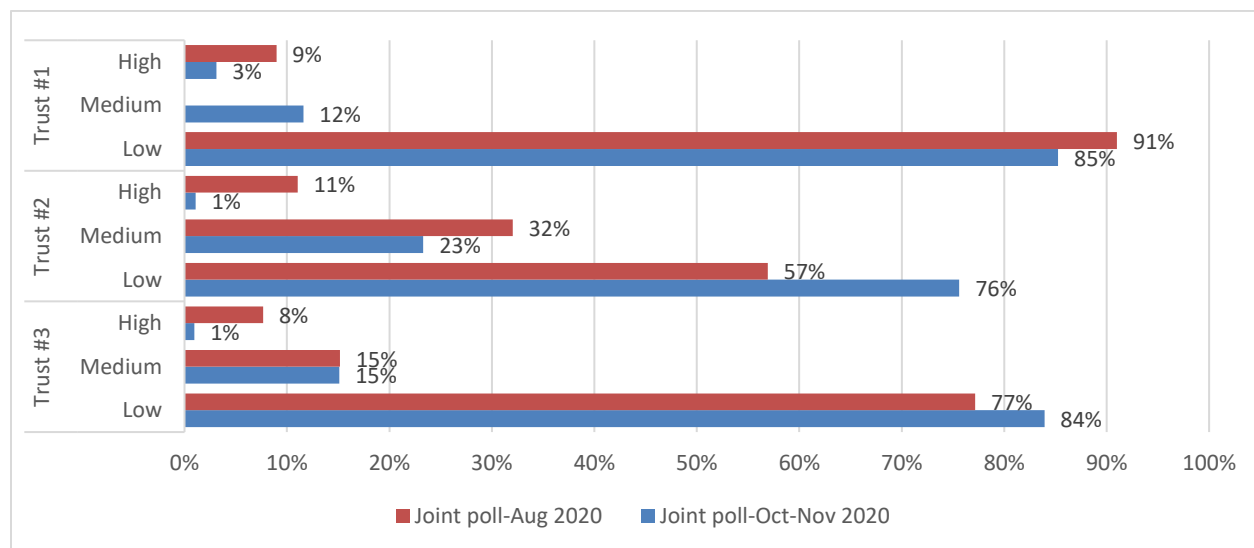
Support for peace is influenced by age. Findings from our October poll, as shown in figure (4) below, show that youth between the ages of 18 and 29 tend to show greater low support for peace (81%) compared to those whose age is 30 and above (72%). The gap based on age is lower according to our August poll (50% and 48% respectively).

Figure (4): Level of support for peace: three levels, two joint polls (August and October 2020), based on age groups



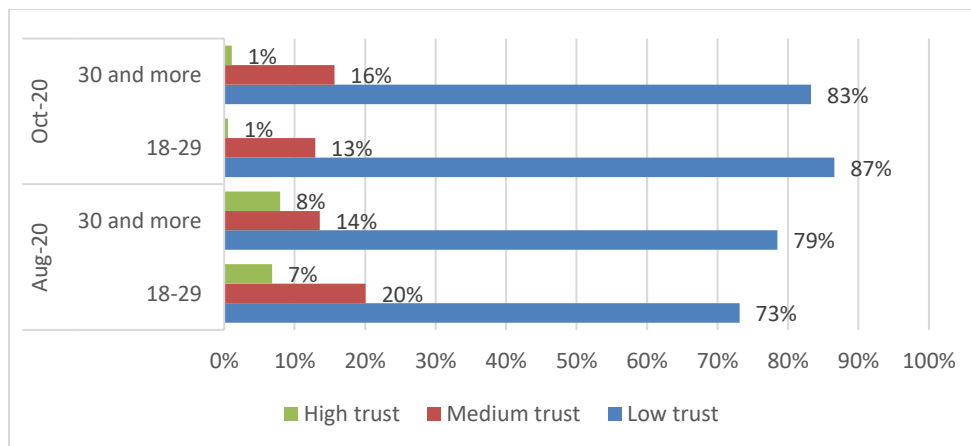
Similar findings are obtained when looking at the trust indicator. Here too, a larger set of questions (15 direct and indirect questions) was used to build the October trust indicator while only five direct and indirect questions were used to build the August indicator. As figure (5) below indicates, findings show mostly low levels of trust for all three trust indicators, but more so in October and in trust indicator #3 (the combined trust indicator).

Figure (5): Three levels of trust, two joint poll (August and October 2020)



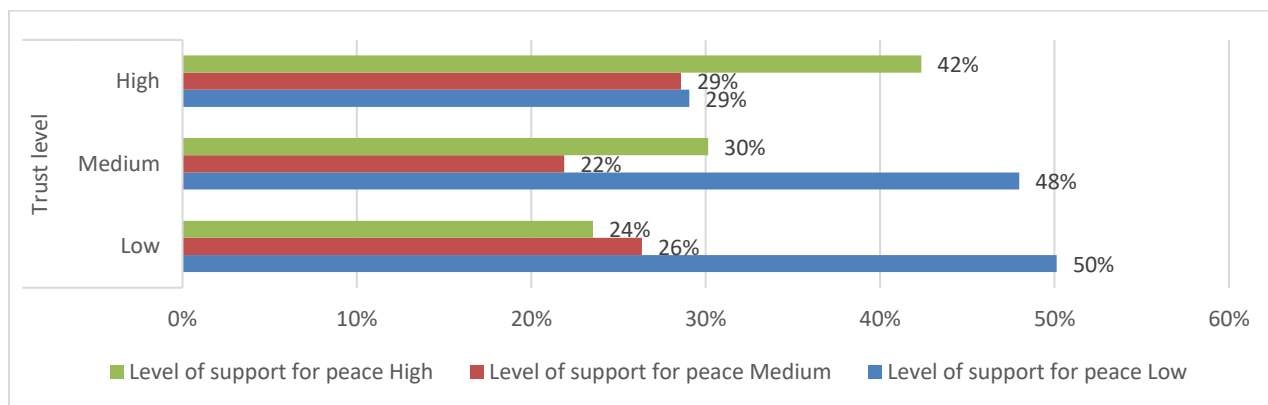
Although the youth did not show in August lower levels of trust than the older age group, indeed showed slightly lower distrust, 73% and 79% respectively, our October findings did show the opposite, as shown in figure (6) below. The youth distrust, in Israeli Jews stood at 87% compared to 83% among the older group. In both cases, the combined trust indicator (#3) was used.

Figure (6): Three levels of trust #3, two joint poll (August and October 2020), by age group



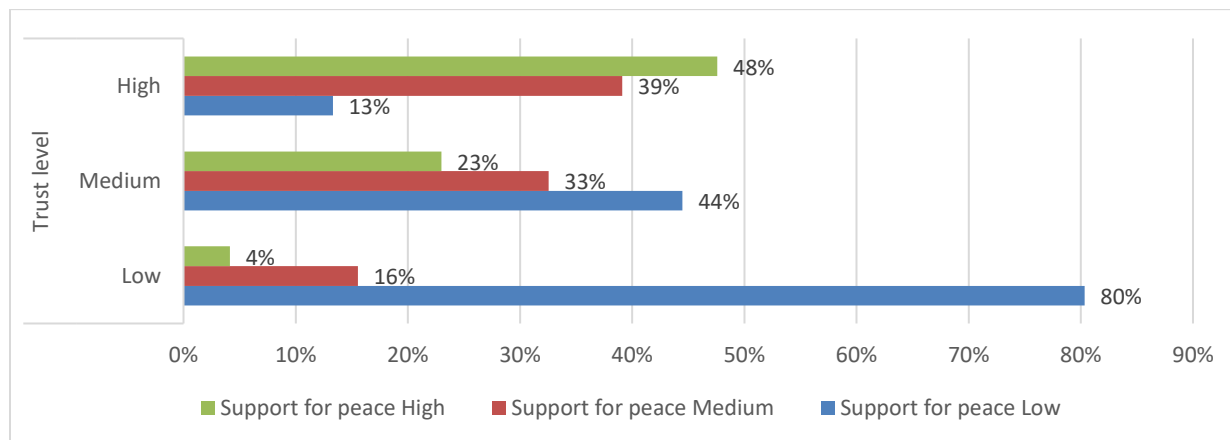
Correlating support for peace with trust level: Using the indicators described above, the following figure (7), from the August 2020 poll, shows strong positive correlation between trust and support for the peace process: the higher the trust, the higher the support for peace and the lower the trust, the lower the support for peace. For example, with a high level of trust, support for peace stood at 42% compared to only 24% when trust was low and 30% when trust was medium. While only 29% of those with high level of trust opposed peace, this percentage increases when trust is medium and low (48% and 50% respectively).

Figure (7): Relationship between trust and support for peace (August 2020)



These findings are confirmed in our joint October poll, as shown in figure (8) below). Here too, a high level of trust (relying on the combined trust indicator #3) increased support for peace to 48%, medium level of trust reduced support for peace to 23%, and low level of trust reduced support for peace further to only 4%. Similarly, only 13% of those with high levels of trust opposed peace, 44% with medium level of trust opposed peace, and an overwhelming majority of 80% of those with low level of trust opposed peace.

Figure (8): Support for peace correlated by level of trust (October 2020)



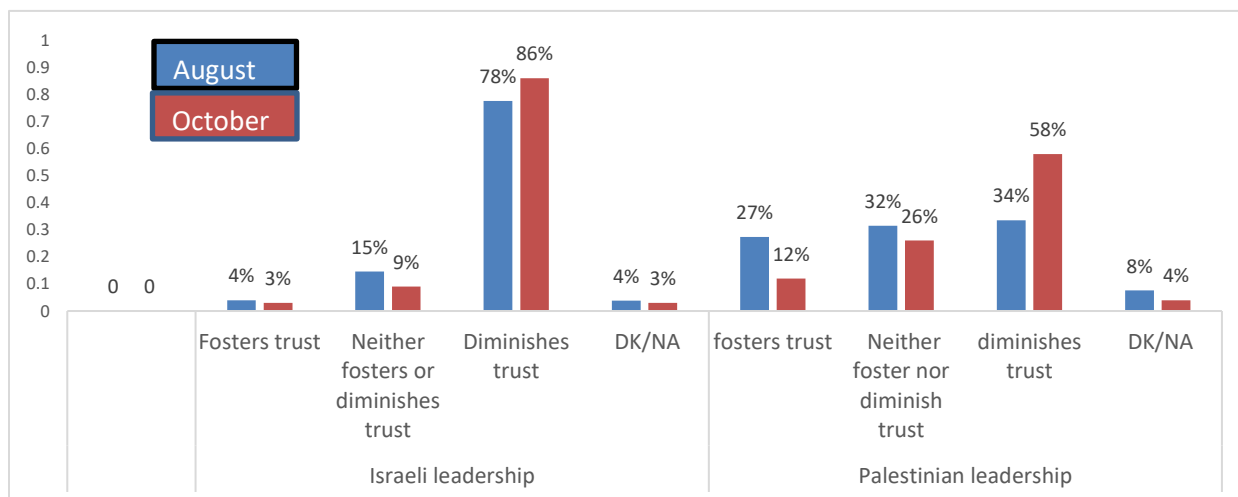
These basic findings are confirmed, in our October poll, when using the other two trust indicators, as can be seen in table (1) below. Trust indicator #1 shows that the highest level of support for peace (42%) is found when trust level is at its highest and the lowest level of support for peace (5%) is found when trust level is at its lowest. Similarly, trust indicator #2 shows that the highest level of support for peace (55%) is found with the highest level of trust and the lowest level of support for peace (4%) is found when trust level is its lowest.

Table (1): **Three indicators of Palestinian trust in Israeli Jews correlated with support for the Palestinian-Israeli peace process, October 2020**

		Trust Indicator #3			Trust Indicator #1			Trust Indicator #2		
		Low trust	medium trust	High trust	Low trust	medium trust	High trust	Low trust	medium trust	High trust
Peace Indicator	Low support	80.3%	44.5%	13.3%	78.8%	52.8%	32.1%	82.1%	51.8%	12.3%
	Medium support	15.5%	32.5%	39.1%	16.7%	28.3%	25.8%	14.1%	31.5%	32.8%
	High support	4.1%	23.0%	47.6%	4.6%	18.9%	42.0%	3.9%	16.7%	54.9%

Trust and different social actors: We examined the extent to which Palestinians believe that different social actors help foster or diminish trust among the two peoples. In our August poll, as indicated below in figure (9), a vast majority of 78% think that the “current Israeli leadership,” of prime minister Netanyahu and his Likud party, diminishes trust. In our October joint poll, 86% said the Israeli leadership diminishes trust and only 3% said it increases trust; 9% said it neither strengthens nor diminishes trust. When looking at the “current Palestinian leadership in the West Bank,” 34% of Palestinian respondents in August thought it diminishes trust, 32% thought it neither diminishes or fosters trust, and 27% thought it fosters trust. In October, the belief that the Palestinian leadership diminishes trust jumped to 58% and the belief that it fosters trust dropped by more than half to 12%.

Figure (9): Palestinian perception of the role of their own political leadership and that of the other side on fostering or diminishing trust (August and October 2020)



When asking about the role of Israeli and Palestinian press, 67% of Palestinians believed in the August joint poll and the 74% in the October joint poll that Israeli press diminishes trust, whereas 39% thought the same about the Palestinian press in August and 54% on October. Relating to the Israeli and Palestinian school curriculum, 67% of Palestinians believed in August and 73% in October that the Israeli curriculum diminishes trust, whereas 33% in August and 47% in October believed the same about the Palestinian curriculum. Finally, when asking about Israeli and Palestinian social media, 44% of Palestinians in August and 55% in October said Palestinian social media diminishes trust, whereas 67% in August and 72% in October thought the same about Israeli social media.

(3) Sources of Mutual Distrust:

Following the difficult reality of this protracted conflict, we examined the conflict-related experiences of both parties and the impact of such experiences on the willingness to trust the other side. Findings show very low level of trust, reflecting the high levels of violence and hardships in the conflict and its negative psychological impact. In this section, we describe the Palestinian findings regarding the three variables covered in our two joint surveys: (1) daily life hardships, (2) exposure to violence, and (3) perception of education. It describes the method used to indicators for the three elements. These variables are believed to significantly contribute to the generation of mutual Palestinian-Israeli distrust.

Findings of the August and October joint polls: In our August joint poll, a majority (61%) among Palestinian participants said they have never participated in a violent political incidents or demonstrations. While 65% of respondents aged 18-34 replied so, the proportion among people older than 55 was lower (53%). However, when asked about participation of a close family member in such incidents, 53% responded positively. Similarly, 60% reported that they have never been hurt in violent incident related to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, but 61% said a close family member has been hurt once (22%) or more than once (39%). Here again, a meaningful gap was found between younger respondents aged 18-34 who reported never being hurt (67%) and older ones aged 55 and more (51%). A majority of Palestinian respondents (59%) said they have witnessed injuries or deaths related to the conflict once (20%) or more than once (39%). The proportions of those who have witnessed conflict-related casualties rose from 43% among the youngest group (18-24) to 65% among the oldest group (55+). When we asked Palestinians whether they have been detained for a long time on an Israeli checkpoint, 25% responded ‘never’, 35% responded positively, and 40% (all Gazans) said the question does not apply for them.

Our October joint poll showed similar results. A majority of 69% among Palestinian participants said they have never participated in a violent political incidents or demonstrations while 31% said they participated in few or many times. When asked about participation of a close family member in such incidents, 42% responded positively. When asked about the number of family members or friends killed in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict 43% said none, 18% said one, and 39% said two or more were killed. An overwhelming majority (96%) said they have witnessed injuries or deaths related to the conflict either with their own eyes or when watching TV. When asked whether they have been detained or delayed for a long time on an Israeli checkpoint, 56% responded ‘never’, 30% responded positively. Among Gazans, 35% said the question does not apply for them. When asked about being prevented from traveling abroad, 69% said “never,” 14% responded positively; and 17% (mostly Gazans) said the question does not apply to them.

These findings indicate that living in a society that has experienced violent conflict for so long, the chances that individuals will have participated in the conflict as actors or victims increases over the years. Moreover, very large segments of Palestinian society experience the harshest consequences of the conflict directly or indirectly, which likely leaves an imprint on their conflict-related attitudes, most importantly the willingness to trust the other side.

The August 2020 joint poll examined also the levels of fear and worry among the Palestinians. Most (58%) expressed worry and fear that they or a member of their family will be hurt by Israelis or that their land will be confiscated or home demolished or that they would be expelled or prevented from reaching their land behind the separation barrier or wall; 40% are not worried. Moreover, an overwhelming majority of 81% indicated that it is worried or very much worried about the future of the Palestinian people.

The October 2020 joint poll found that 60% were worried that they or a member of their family will be hurt by Israelis or that their land will be confiscated or home demolished or that they would be expelled or prevented from reaching their land behind the separation barrier or wall; 32% were not worried or where worried a little. As in the August poll, an overwhelming majority of 74% indicated that it is worried or very much worried about the future of the Palestinian people.

The August poll also examined which view of the other Palestinians think that their own education system and that of the other side promotes. When thinking about their own education system, 37% of Palestinians said it calls for seeing Israelis through negative stereotypes and labels, with some interesting variations according to age: While 33% of people 55 and older replied so, the proportion among respondents aged 18-34 was 42%. Looking at the Palestinian sample as whole, 31% thought their education system is indifferent to Israelis, and 16% said it calls for seeing Israelis positively as fellow human beings with legitimate needs and rights. When thinking about the education system of the other side, the answers were dramatically different: 72% of Palestinians said it calls for seeing the other group negatively.

The October poll findings were similar to those of the August poll showing that when thinking about their own experience with the Palestinian education system, 53% said it calls for seeing Israelis through negative stereotypes and labels; 24% thought their education system is indifferent to Israelis, and 13% said it calls for seeing Israelis positively as fellow human beings with legitimate needs and rights. When asked about the entire educational system of the other side, 71% said it views the Palestinians through negative stereotypes and labels; 13% said it views the Palestinians indifferently, and only 8% said it views the Palestinians positively as fellow human beings. When thinking about the curriculum in the education system of the other side, 79% said it calls for seeing the Palestinians negatively.

Building indicators for hardships, exposure to violence, and education: For the analysis in this section, we have developed quantitative indicators for the three variables believed to generate distrust, hardships, exposure to violence, and negative perception of education on the other side. For all variables, the indicators have three levels: high, medium, and low, see the following box for details on the building of the three indicators based on the findings of the two joint polls.

Indicator of daily life hardships, October 2020	Indicator of daily life hardships, August 2020
<p>The <i>October 2020</i> indicator for measuring daily life has three levels, assuming the following values: Low: from less than 0 to 0.39 Medium: from 0.40 to 0.59 High: from 0.60 to 1.2</p>	<p>The <i>August 2020</i> indicator for measuring daily life hardships has three levels, assuming the following values: Low: from less than 0 to 0.39 Medium: from 0.40 to 0.59 High: from 0.60 to 1.2</p>

<p>The indicator represented the average sum of support/opposition, agree/disagree in the following 7 variables:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Worried about one's own and family's safety, or being expelled, or lose land or have my home demolished, or being prevented from reaching my land beyond the wall or separation barrier am worried about the future of the Palestinian people 2. Feeling of loss of hope for a better future 3. Experiencing detention for a long time at Israeli checkpoints 4. Could not reach one's own land beyond the separation wall or barrier 5. Denied from leaving Palestine, or land was confiscated 6. Family members and friends or acquaintances have been killed in violence of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict 	<p>The indicator represented the average sum of support/opposition, agree/disagree in the following 5 variables:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Worried about one's own and family's safety, or being expelled, or lose land or have my home demolished, or being prevented from reaching my land beyond the wall or separation barrier 2. Worried about the future of the Palestinian people 3. Experiencing detention for a long time at Israeli checkpoints 4. Could not reach my land beyond the separation wall or barrier 5. Could not obtain a building permit from the Israeli side
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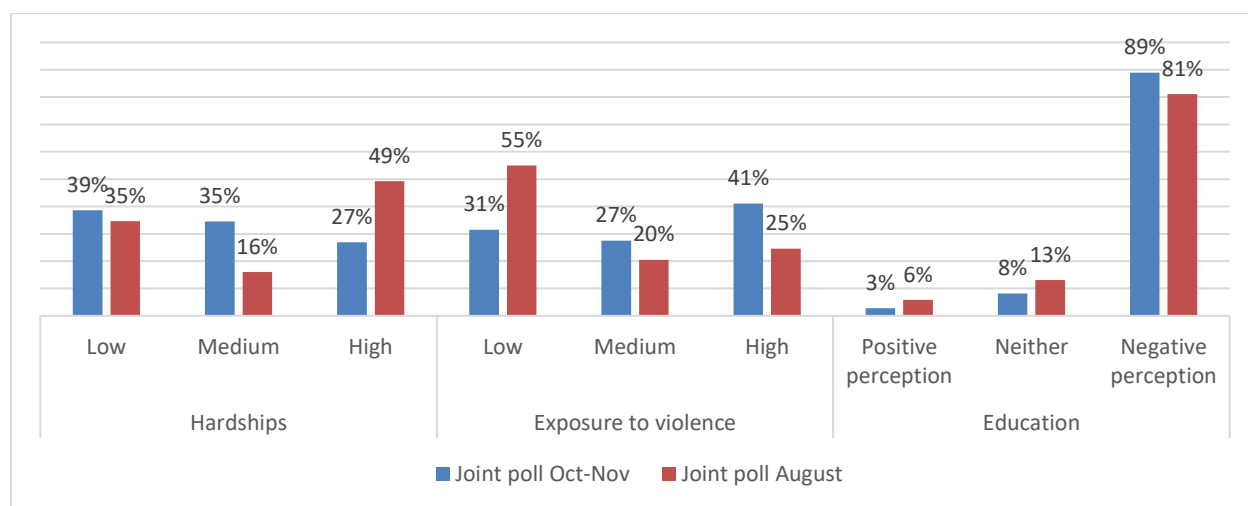
<p>Indicator of exposure to violence, October 2020</p> <p>The <i>October 2020</i> indicator for measuring exposure to violence has three levels, assuming the following values: Low: from less than 0 to 0.39 Medium: from 0.40 to 0.59 High: from 0.60 to 1.2</p> <p>The indicator represented the average sum of support/opposition, agree/disagree in the following 5 variables:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participation in violent political incidents or demonstrations 2. Participation of close family members in violent incidents related to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict 3. Seen videos on TV of a harm carried out by the Israeli Jews 4. Witnessing injuries or deaths related to the conflict 	<p>Indicator of exposure to violence, August 2020</p> <p>The <i>August 2020</i> indicator for measuring exposure to violence has three levels, assuming the following values: Low: from less than 0 to 0.39 Medium: from 0.40 to 0.59 High: from 0.60 to 1.2</p> <p>The indicator represented the average sum of support/opposition, agree/disagree in the following 5 variables:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participation in violent political incidents or demonstrations 2. Participation of close family members in violent incidents related to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict 3. Being hurt in violent incidents related to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict 4. Close family members being hurt in violent incidents related to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict
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5. Witnessing harm inflicted by by Israeli Jews against Palestinians	5. Witnessing injuries or deaths related to the conflict
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Indicator of perception of the role of the educational system, October 2020	Indicator of perception of the role of the educational system, August 2020
<p>The <i>October 2020</i> indicator for measuring perception of the role of the other sides' educational system in the conflict has three levels, assuming the following values: Low: from less than 0 to 0.39 Medium: from 0.40 to 0.59 High: from 0.60 to 1.2</p> <p>The indicator represented the average sum of support/opposition, agree/disagree in the following 7 variables:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Perception of the manner in which Palestinian teachers portray the other side: positively, negatively, or indifference 2. Perception of the Israeli school curriculum regarding the manner in which it views the Palestinians: positively, negatively, or indifference 3. Perception of the manner in which Israeli teachers present the Palestinians to Israeli Jewish students: positively, negatively, or indifference 4. Perception of the manner in which the education one and family receive at school portrays the other side: positively, negatively, or indifference 5. Perception of the manner in which the Israeli Jewish educational system portrays Palestinians: positively, negatively, or indifference 6. Perception of the role of Israeli school curriculum in fostering or diminishing trust among the two peoples 7. Perception of the role of Palestinian school curriculum in fostering or diminishing trust among the two peoples 	<p>The <i>August 2020</i> indicator for measuring perception of the role of the both sides' educational system in the conflict has three levels, assuming the following values: Low: from less than 0 to 0.39 Medium: from 0.40 to 0.59 High: from 0.60 to 1.2</p> <p>The indicator represented the average sum of support/opposition, agree/disagree in the following 4 variables:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Perception of the manner in which the education one and family receive at school portrays the other side: positively, negatively, or indifference 2. Perception of the manner in which the education on the other side portrays Palestinians: positively, negatively, or indifference 3. Perception of the role of Israeli school curriculum in fostering or diminishing trust among the two peoples 4. Perception of the role of Palestinian school curriculum in fostering or diminishing trust among the two peoples

The indicators' building exercise produced the following findings. As figure (10) below indicates, the hardships indicator was found relatively high in the August poll and relatively low in the October poll. Exposure to violence was mostly low in August and high in October, but the negative perception of education on the other side was predominantly high in both polls.

Figure (10): Three indicators of sources of distrust in the two joint polls



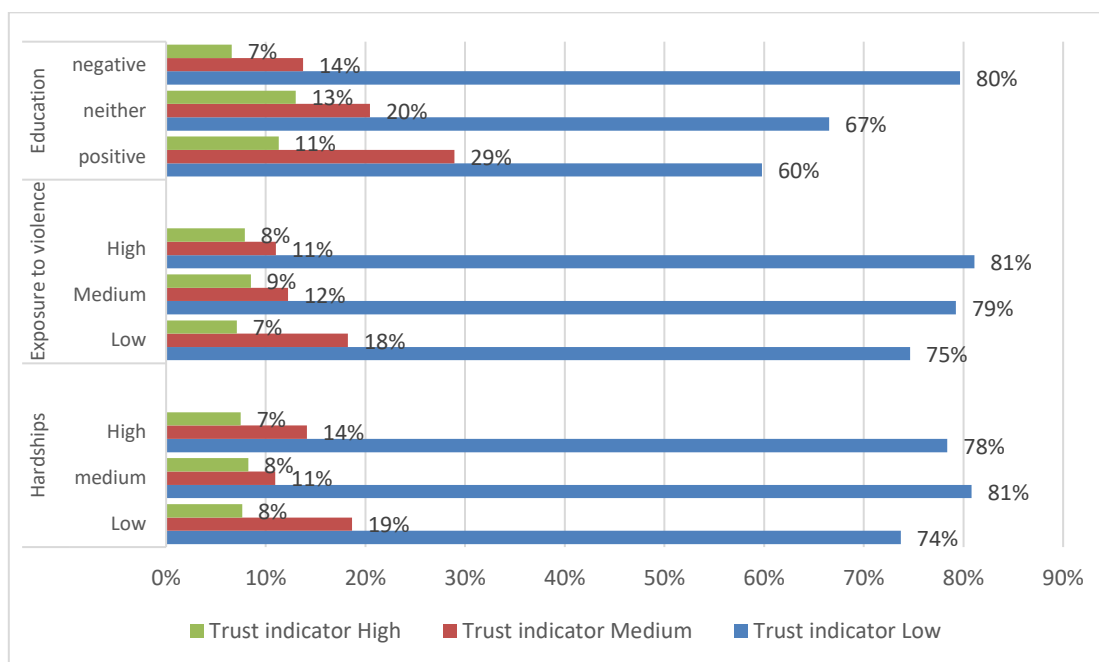
The three indicators are not influenced by age. Indeed, the older group indicated slightly higher level of hardships and higher levels of exposure to violence than the youth in our August poll and the same level of hardships and greater exposure to violence in our October poll. In both polls, negative perception of the Israeli educational system is almost identical for the youth and the older age group.

Correlating trust with the levels of hardships, exposure to violence, and perception of education: Using the three indicators described above, the following figure, from the August 2020 poll, shows a somewhat weak correlation between trust and hardships and exposure to violence and strong correlation between trust and perception of education. A high level of hardship produced a low level of trust standing at 78% while a low level of hardship produced a low level of trust standing at 74%. In other words, the higher the level of hardships, the higher the level of distrust and the lower the level of hardships, the lower the level of distrust.

Similarly, a high level of exposure to violence produced a low level of trust standing at 81% while a low level of exposure to violence produced a low level of trust standing at 75%. In other words, the higher the level of exposure to violence, the higher the level of distrust and the lower the level of exposure, the lower the level of distrust.

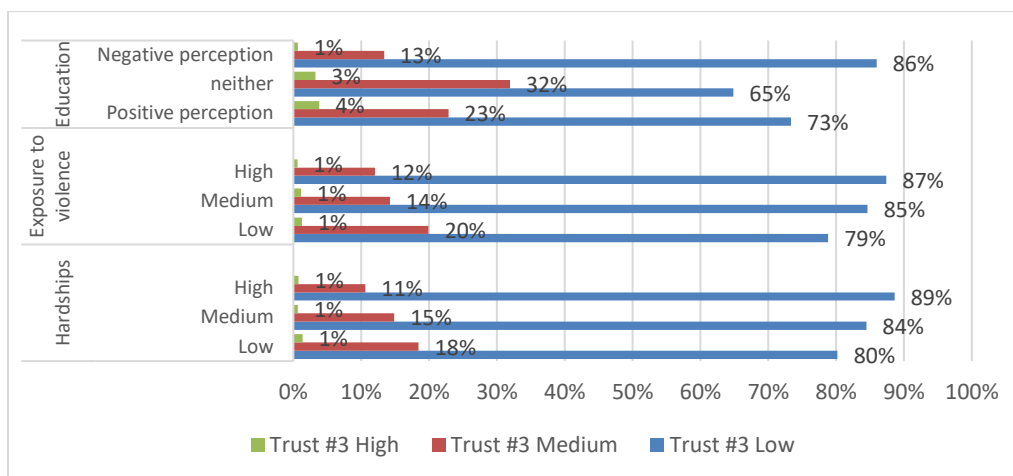
Finally, as shown in figure (11) below, a negative indicator of perception of education produced a low level of trust standing at 80% while a positive indicator of perception of education produced a low level of trust standing at 60%. In other words, the more positive the perception of education on the other side, the more likely the level of distrust would be lower and the more negative the perception of education, the more likely the level of distrust would be higher. These findings are consistent with the research hypothesis in which these three elements contribute to greater levels of distrust in the other side.

Figure (11): Trust level correlated with three sources of distrust-August 2020



These findings are confirmed in our joint October poll, as shown in figure (12) below. Here too, a high level of hardships increases low trust to 89% while a low level of hardships reduces low trust to 80%. Similarly, a high exposure to violence increases low trust to 87% while a low a low level of exposure to violence reduces low trust to 79%. Finally, a negative perception of the Israeli educational system increases low trust to 86% while a positive perception of that educational system reduces low trust to 73%.

Figure (12): Trust level correlated with three sources of distrust, October 2020



Other sources of distrust: Our October poll identified other potential sources of distrust including various socio-psychological variables. These included (1) religiosity and ideology, (2) the legacy of the Nakba of 1948, (3) perception of the western countries, and (4) perception of the other.

(1) *Religiosity and ideology:* Level of religiosity is a reasonably good predictor of distrust. An overwhelming majority (86%) of the religious respondents received low trust score, the somewhat religious did slightly better (82%), and the not religious received the best score (67%). Political-religious ideology produced similar results with Islamists receiving the highest score of distrust (87%), followed by mainstream nationalists (83%), traditionalists (69%) and the left (64%).

(2) *The legacy of the 1948 Nakba, or catastrophe:* Findings show that those who believe or strongly believe that the Palestinian Nakba cannot be forgotten and should serve as a reminder for the Palestinians tend to be less willing to trust Israeli Jews, scoring the highest distrust marks (82% and 89% respectively). On the other hand, those who disagree with this belief tend to show more willingness to trust the other side: 61% for those who disagree and 75% for those who strongly disagree.

(3) *Perception of the western countries:* Palestinians who view western countries as harboring anti-Palestinian sentiments tend to believe that continued Israeli occupation is sustained by these sentiments. These Palestinians tend to be less willing to trust Israeli Jews. The distrust score for those who strongly share this view stands at 94% while those who do not share this view of the western countries tend to be more willing to trust Israeli Jews, with a score of 68% and those who strongly disagree with this view receive a score of 72%.

(4) *Perception of Israeli Jews*: As indicated earlier, the joint surveys show highly negative Palestinian perception of Israeli Jews believing that they do not want peace and would not implement a peace agreement if one is signed. The findings show correlation between perception of the other and willingness to trust or distrust it. For example, those who agree or strongly agree with the statement that Israeli Jews are peaceful, receive a lower distrust score of 52% while those who reject or strongly reject that statement tend to have a much higher distrust score of 82% and 94% respectively. Similarly, those who think Israeli Jews are just as much victims of the conflict as the Palestinians obtain a distrust score of only 69% while those who think or strongly think the opposite tend to receive a score of 85% and 91% respectively. Also, those who agree or strongly agree with the statement that there are Israeli Jews who want to end the conflict receive a distrust score of 80% and 84% respectively while those on the opposite side receive a distrust score of 87% and 93% respectively. For those who agree or strongly agree with the statement that Israeli Jews will never accept the existence of a Palestinian state, the distrust score rises to 86% and 95% respectively while those who disagree receive a score of 66%.

(4) Conclusions and Policy Implications:

The study shows that although exposure to violence related to the conflict, experience of violence and hardships, and negative perceptions of the educational system of the other side do have some effect on trust on Palestinians who live under the harsh reality of military occupation, other determinants are the socio-psychological variables, such as beliefs, attitudes and emotions, related to religiosity, ideology and perception of the other.

Some of these beliefs and attitudes are acquired at a very early age. They are learned by children at an early age and remain in their socio-psychological repertoire and may have latent influence later on. These contents serve as fertile ground for the later development of conflict attitudes. They may constitute a part of children's general worldviews which remains relatively constant across time. Eventually, these will pose a barrier to peaceful conflict resolution.

Living under military occupation, Palestinians experience hardships and exposure to violence on daily basis. These are some of the reasons for such strong distrust of Israeli Jews. Changing the reality on the ground and restoring hope for peace and the two-state solution is essential for restoring some level of trust. Conflict supporting narratives need to be addressed before any trust can be restored.

1. *Change the new reality on the ground*: For Palestinians, the reality on the ground worsens by the day as land is confiscated, homes demolished, movement and access restricted, and settlers' violence continues. Although Palestinian and Israeli authorities coordinate with each other on essential civil and security matters, no dialogue takes place on how to ease daily living conditions, stop the building of settlements, or eradicate settlers' violence. To be effective in reducing distrust and hate, coordination between the

two sides need to cover all these additional areas of daily friction and difficulties and search for ways to deliver security to both sides. It goes without saying that only the ending of occupation and the building of permanent peace can bring about a real restoration of trust and begin the process of reconciliation.

2. *Stop incitements and minimize negative language and phrasing:* Various formal and informal sources in Israel, present the Palestinian school textbooks, teachers, mass media and the leaders as inciting against Israel, Zionism (Jewish Nationalism) and as being anti-Semitic. This practice can be found also on the Palestinian side. It is exaggerated and augmented serving the struggle between the two contradicting and rival narratives.
3. *Contact between People:* Contact between members of the two societies is one of the most researched methods to change beliefs, attitudes, and emotions in order to improve the relations between them.
4. *Use of mass media:* Mass media is one of the most powerful agents that provides information and shapes public opinion. Mass media should stop presenting the other side in negative way and develop peace journalism. It can supply major information about the other group; it can provide information about the culture of the other- with films, theatrical plays, or entertainment programs.
5. *Education:* Education constitutes one of the most important methods for eradicating distrust. This method involves using the school system since this system is often the only institution of which the society can make wide scope use to change the psychological repertoire of society members. Education for building trust must begin at an early age and continue through the years of schooling. Also, it is possible to a establish joint Israeli-Palestinian committee to examine existing textbooks and curricula to eliminate any derogative expressions.
6. *Joint Projects:* Joint projects of various kinds can serve as a method for building trust. They can be in different areas such as culture, health, agriculture, or science. Joint projects in different areas between Israelis and Palestinians can foster links between members of the two groups at different levels of society, such as elites, professionals, as well as grass roots. This method provides opportunities for personal encounters in which past opponents can form personal relations.



EUROPEAN UNION



من الشعب الياباني
From the People of Japan

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