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## **Pearson Institute/AP-NORC Poll: Public opinion of the Israel and Hamas conflict nearly a year after the October 7<sup>th</sup> attacks**

*About 3 in 4 adults say Israel, Hamas, and Iran are to blame for the continued fighting, and about half say the U.S. is responsible.*

**CHICAGO, October 2, 2024** – As the one-year anniversary of the deadly Hamas attacks on Israel on October 7<sup>th</sup> nears, the public's priorities for U.S. involvement remain focused on a few key foreign policy objectives.

Fifty-seven percent of adults say it is very important to recover hostages being held in Gaza by Hamas and 52% believe it is important to negotiate a permanent ceasefire between Israel and Hamas, according to a new study from [The Pearson Institute for the Study and Resolution of Global Conflicts at the University of Chicago](#) and [The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research](#).

The survey will be released ahead of the [2024 Pearson Global Forum on Oct. 18<sup>th</sup>](#), which will convene researchers and policymakers to address these issues and develop strategies to prevent and resolve international conflicts.

About 3 in 4 say Hamas (76%), Israel (75%), and Iran (73%) are at least somewhat responsible for the war's continuation while 49% say the same about the United States.

Public attitudes toward the conflict have remained relatively stable, but there have been some shifts in opinion within the last year. More people view Israel as an ally this year compared to August 2023 before the attacks (40% vs. 32%).

The public is also more supportive of the establishment of an independent Palestinian state now than in August 2023 (29% vs. 22%), but there remains no clear consensus on a two-state solution as 49% neither favor nor oppose an independent Palestinian state.

"The survey shows many adults view Israel as an ally, but the public believes both Israel and Hamas are responsible for the continued war," said Paul Poast, Associate Professor in the Department of Political Science at the University of Chicago. "While we've seen some slight shifts in views about the conflict in the last year, public opinion has remained relatively stable over time."

There has been no significant change in views of Israelis and Palestinians since last August. Twenty-five percent of adults feel more sympathetic toward Israelis than Palestinians while 15% say the opposite.

Likewise, there has been little change since last November in the percent of adults who say it is very important to recover hostages being held in Gaza by Hamas (57% vs. 63%) and to negotiate a permanent cease-fire (52% vs. 48%).

There are significant divisions in attitudes toward the Israelis, Palestinians, and the conflict related to political partisanship, religion, and age.

For example, Republicans are more likely than Democrats to sympathize more with Israelis (46% vs. 10%), evangelical Christians are more likely to sympathize with Israelis than other adults (42% vs. 20%), and adults 45 and older are more sympathetic to Israelis than younger adults (31% vs. 18%).

There are also differences within each party. More Democrats 45 and older than younger Democrats think the military response from Israel in the Gaza Strip has gone too far (68% v. 55%). Only 5% of evangelical Republicans favor the establishment of an independent Palestinian state compared to 17% of all other Republicans.

“The results highlight that there are not only differences in views between Democrats and Republicans, but also divides within each party related to age and religion,” said David Sterrett, a principal research scientist with The AP-NORC Center. “But there is also consensus around some points, including that both Israel and Hamas are at least somewhat responsible for the continued fighting and strong support for recovering the hostages.”

### **About the Study**

This study was funded by The Pearson Institute for the Study and Resolution of Global Conflicts at the University of Chicago and conducted by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research. Staff from The Pearson Institute and The AP-NORC Center collaborated on all aspects of the study. Interviews for this survey were conducted between September 12 and September 16, 2024, with adults age 18 and older representing the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Panel members were randomly drawn from AmeriSpeak, and 1,111 completed the survey. Interviews were conducted in English. The overall margin of sampling error is +/- 4.0 percentage points at the 95 percent confidence level, including the design effect.

A full description of the study methodology for the survey can be found at the end of the report on [www.apnorc.org](http://www.apnorc.org)

### **About the Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research**

The AP-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research taps into the power of social science research and the highest-quality journalism to bring key information to people across the nation and throughout the world.

- The Associated Press (AP) is an independent global news organization dedicated to factual reporting. Founded in 1846, AP today remains the most trusted source of fast, accurate, unbiased news in all formats and the essential provider of the technology and services vital to the news business. More than half the world’s population sees AP journalism every day. [www.ap.org](http://www.ap.org)
- NORC at the University of Chicago is one of the oldest objective and nonpartisan research institutions in the world. [www.norc.org](http://www.norc.org)

The two organizations have established The AP-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research to conduct, analyze, and distribute social science research in the public interest on newsworthy topics, and to use the power of journalism to tell the stories that research reveals. In its 10 years, The AP-NORC Center has conducted more than 250 studies exploring the critical issues facing the public, covering topics like health care, the economy, COVID-19, trust in media, and more. Learn more at [www.apnorc.org](http://www.apnorc.org).

### **About the Pearson Institute**

The Pearson Institute for the Study and Resolution of Global Conflicts at the University of Chicago promotes the ongoing discussion, understanding and resolution of global conflicts, and contributes to the advancement of a global society more at peace. Established through a grant from The Thomas L. Pearson and The Pearson Family Members Foundation, and led by Institute Director James Robinson, co-author of *Why Nations Fail* and *The Narrow Corridor*, the Institute achieves this by employing an analytically rigorous, data-driven approach and global perspective to understanding violent conflict. It is global in its scope, activities, and footprint. Attracting students and scholars from around the world, its faculty is in the field studying conflicts – and approaches to conflict resolution – in Nigeria, Colombia and Afghanistan, to name just a few. 2024 marks the seventh consecutive year of the Pearson Global Forum.

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