

Public Opinion Survey on the Perception of Turkey and Its Influence on Israel's Interests

Report based on a survey conducted in May–June 2026.

Methodology

The study was conducted as a dedicated online survey among 1,007 respondents — internet users aged 18 and over. The sample is national and representative of this segment of the population of the State of Israel; Jewish and Arab respondents were represented in proportion to their share of the population.

The public opinion survey was conducted in May–June 2026 by the Geocartography Sociological Center, using a questionnaire developed by the Dor Moriah Analytical Center. The maximum sampling error under this design is $\pm 3.1\%$ at a 95% confidence level.

The text describes in detail only those differences that are simultaneously statistically significant under the original methodology and substantively meaningful for the analysis. The statistical significance of differences was tested using the chi-square test for the distribution of responses across groups, at a significance level of $p < 0.05$.

For some scale questions, the report calculates indices as the difference between the sum of positive and the sum of negative responses. A positive index value indicates a predominance of positive assessments; a negative value indicates a predominance of negative assessments. The theoretical range of the index runs from -100 to $+100$: the closer the value is to either pole, the stronger the corresponding predominance.

Data and Interpretation

Table 1 — Turkey appears regularly in news about the Middle East. To what extent do you follow this topic?

Response	Total	Secular	Traditional	Religious/Haredi	Jewish sector	Arab sector
Follows regularly	18.3%	18.2%	15.8%	20.5%	17.8%	20.5%
Follows occasionally	41.4%	43.9%	44.4%	35.5%	42.4%	36%
Follows rarely	20%	19.2%	18.3%	21.7%	19.4%	23%
Does not follow at all	20.4%	18.7%	21.5%	22.3%	20.3%	20.5%
Turkey-topic engagement index^[1]	19.4 pp	24.2 pp	20.4 pp	12.0 pp	20.6 pp	13.0 pp
<i>N</i>	<i>N=1007</i>	<i>N=401</i>	<i>N=279</i>	<i>N=166</i>	<i>N=846</i>	<i>N=161</i>

The topic of Turkey in the Middle Eastern context is on most respondents' radar: 18.3% follow it regularly and a further 41.4% occasionally. At the same time, 20.0% follow the topic rarely and 20.4% not at all. The engagement index, which captures the difference between the broadly engaged and broadly disengaged responses, is positive (19.4 pp), pointing to a predominance of respondents who follow the topic.

A statistical test of the response distributions shows that differences by level of religiosity, and between the Jewish and Arab sectors, do not reach statistical significance ($p=0.502$ and $p=0.434$, respectively).

Table 2 — Which of the following best matches how you perceive Turkey today?

Response	Total	Secular	Traditional	Religious/Haredi	Jewish sector	Arab sector
Turkey is a friendly country, or one with the potential for friendly relations with Israel	4.9%	1.5%	2.2%	2.4%	1.9%	20.5%
Turkey is a country with which both cooperation and friction are possible	21.2%	22.4%	19.4%	9%	18.8%	33.5%
Turkey is an unfriendly country, but not a direct threat to Israel's security	28.5%	30.9%	28.7%	31.3%	30.3%	19.3%
Turkey is a serious strategic threat to Israel	34.4%	38.7%	39.1%	44.6%	40%	5%
None of these	1.4%	0.5%	2.2%	2.4%	1.4%	1.2%
Don't know / no opinion	9.7%	6%	8.6%	10.2%	7.7%	20.5%
Turkey threat-perception index^[^2]	-36.8 pp	-45.6 pp	-46.2 pp	-64.5 pp	-49.5 pp	+29.7 pp
<i>N</i>	<i>N=1007</i>	<i>N=401</i>	<i>N=279</i>	<i>N=166</i>	<i>N=846</i>	<i>N=161</i>

Public perception is dominated by a wary and negative attitude toward Turkey. The most common response is "a serious strategic threat" (34.4%); a further 28.5% regard Turkey as an unfriendly country, though not a direct threat to Israel's security. The share holding a positive view is very low: only 4.9% see Turkey as friendly or as a country with the potential for friendly relations. The threat-perception index — covering both the "threat" and "unfriendly country" responses — stands at -36.8 pp, meaning that negative perceptions markedly outweigh softer assessments.

The sharpest divide runs along national lines. The statistical significance of the differences is confirmed both by level of religiosity ($p=0.019$) and between the Jewish and Arab sectors ($p<0.001$). Among Jews, 39.9% consider Turkey a serious strategic threat, against only 5.0% among Arabs; conversely, 20.5% of Arab respondents see Turkey as friendly or as a country with the potential for friendly relations, compared with just 1.9% of Jews.

By level of religiosity, the negative perception is especially pronounced among the religious/Haredi: 44.6% of this group call Turkey a serious strategic threat.

Table 3 — Turkey conducts diplomatic activity in East Jerusalem through its Consulate General; the head of the mission also maintains official ties with the Palestinian Authority. What is your overall position on this activity?

Response	Total	Secular	Traditional	Religious/Haredi	Jewish sector	Arab sector
Very positive	3.9%	1.5%	1.8%	1.2%	1.5%	16.1%
Somewhat positive	7.4%	6%	5.7%	1.2%	5%	20.5%
Neutral	15.9%	17.7%	14%	4.8%	13.9%	26.1%
Somewhat negative	21.7%	25.7%	26.5%	19.3%	24.7%	6.2%
Very negative	38.6%	40.9%	42.3%	60.2%	45.2%	4.3%
Don't know	12.4%	8.2%	9.7%	13.3%	9.7%	26.7%
Index of attitudes toward Turkey's diplomatic activity in East Jerusalem^[^3]	-49.1 pp	-59.1 pp	-61.3 pp	-77.1 pp	-63.4 pp	26.1 pp
<i>N</i>	<i>N=1007</i>	<i>N=401</i>	<i>N=279</i>	<i>N=166</i>	<i>N=846</i>	<i>N=161</i>

Israelis' attitude toward Turkey's diplomatic activity in East Jerusalem is predominantly negative: 38.6% rate it very negatively and a further 21.7% somewhat negatively. Positive ratings total only 11.3%, while 15.9% take a neutral position (Table 3). The index, calculated as the difference between positive and negative assessments, stands at -49.1 pp, showing a predominance of negative ratings.

The gap between the Jewish and Arab sectors is especially wide here: among Jews, negative ratings total 69.9%, against 10.6% among Arabs; positive ratings, by contrast, come from 36.6% of Arab respondents and only 6.5% of Jewish ones. By level of religiosity, the harshest stance belongs to the religious/Haredi: 60.2% of this group rate Turkey's activity very negatively. This is one of the widest gaps across the entire dataset. A statistical test of the response distributions shows that both the differences by level of religiosity and those between the Jewish and Arab sectors are significant at $p < 0.001$.

Table 4 — In East Jerusalem, projects in education, culture, religion, and heritage preservation are carried out with the participation or support of Turkish state bodies, religious organizations, and public foundations. What is your position on this activity?

Response	Total	Secular	Traditional	Religious/Haredi	Jewish sector	Arab sector
Very positive	4.5%	2.7%	1.4%	1.8%	2.1%	16.8%
Somewhat positive	9.5%	8%	7.9%	2.4%	6.9%	23.6%
Neutral	30.6%	28.7%	30.8%	19.3%	27.5%	46.6%
Somewhat negative	28.6%	36.4%	29.7%	29.5%	32.9%	6.2%
Very negative	26.8%	24.2%	30.1%	47%	30.6%	6.8%
Index of attitudes toward Turkish social and cultural projects in East Jerusalem^[4]	-41.4 pp	-49.9 pp	-50.5 pp	-72.3 pp	-54.5 pp	27.3 pp
<i>N</i>	<i>N=1007</i>	<i>N=401</i>	<i>N=279</i>	<i>N=166</i>	<i>N=846</i>	<i>N=161</i>

Attitudes toward Turkish projects in East Jerusalem are also negative on balance, though less categorical than on the question of diplomatic activity. Negative ratings total 55.4%, positive ratings 14.0%, while the neutral position reaches 30.6%. The index, calculated as the difference between positive and negative assessments, stands at -41.4 pp, indicating the degree to which negative ratings predominate.

The national divide remains central: among Jews, negative ratings total 63.5%, against 13.0% among Arabs; positive ratings come from 40.4% of Arab respondents and 9.0% of Jewish ones ($p < 0.001$). By level of religiosity, the religious/Haredi stand out in particular: 47.0% of this group give a very negative rating, against 24.2% among the secular and 30.1% among the traditional ($p < 0.001$).

Table 5 — Which of the following approaches is closest to your position on the Turkish activity in East Jerusalem described above?

Response	Total	Secular	Traditional	Religious/Haredi	Jewish sector	Arab sector
Such activity should be permitted, as it conforms to international diplomatic and humanitarian norms and may help preserve the cultural and historical heritage of East Jerusalem	7.6%	4.7%	1.8%	3%	3.4%	29.8%

Response	Total	Secular	Traditional	Religious/Haredi	Jewish sector	Arab sector
Such activity may have positive aspects, but it could strengthen foreign political and ideological influence and should therefore be under Israeli control	26%	31.2%	25.4%	15.1%	26.1%	25.5%
Such activity creates a high risk of external political and ideological influence contrary to Israel's interests, and should be permitted only under limited conditions and strict control	45.5%	48.1%	51.3%	64.5%	52.4%	9.3%
None of these	5.4%	3.7%	6.8%	6.6%	5.3%	5.6%
Don't know	15.5%	12.2%	14.7%	10.8%	12.8%	29.8%
<i>N</i>	<i>N=1007</i>	<i>N=401</i>	<i>N=279</i>	<i>N=166</i>	<i>N=846</i>	<i>N=161</i>

Most respondents do not favor permitting such activity freely. The most common position is to allow it only under limited conditions and strict control, owing to the high risk of external political and ideological influence; 45.5% respond this way. A further 26.0% allow that it may have positive aspects but consider Israeli control necessary. Only 7.6% of respondents are prepared to permit such activity unconditionally.

Differences between the sectors are sharp. Among Jews, 52.4% support the most restrictive option — limited conditions and strict control — against 9.3% among Arabs. In the Arab sector, the share who believe such activity should be permitted is far higher (29.8% versus 3.4% among Jews), as is the share unable to answer (29.8%). By level of religiosity, the restrictive option is chosen most often by the religious/Haredi — 64.5%.

Table 6 — In your view, to what extent is there a risk that Turkey will influence Israel's domestic politics through diplomatic, religious, social, and cultural structures?

Response	Total	Secular	Traditional	Religious/Haredi	Jewish sector	Arab sector
There is a very high risk	12.6%	14%	11.5%	18.7%	14.1%	5%
There is a fairly high risk	24.6%	24.9%	30.8%	26.5%	27.2%	11.2%
There is a fairly low risk	35.1%	40.1%	34.8%	29.5%	36.3%	28.6%
There is no risk at all	12.9%	8%	9.7%	10.2%	9%	33.5%
Don't know	14.8%	13%	13.3%	15.1%	13.5%	21.7%
Index of perceived risk of Turkish influence on Israel's domestic politics^[^5]	-10.7 pp	-9.2 pp	-2.2 pp	5.4 pp	-4.0 pp	-46.0 pp
<i>N</i>	<i>N=1007</i>	<i>N=401</i>	<i>N=279</i>	<i>N=166</i>	<i>N=846</i>	<i>N=161</i>

As Table 6 shows, risk assessments are split: 37.2% consider the risk high or fairly high, while 48.0% rate it fairly low or nonexistent. The share unable to answer is 14.8%. The index, calculated as the difference between high and low risk assessments, stands at -10.7 pp, showing a predominance of low- or no-risk assessments.

Differences along national lines are notable: among Jews, 41.3% consider the risk high or fairly high, against 16.1% among Arabs; meanwhile 33.5% of Arab respondents believe there is no risk at all, versus 9.0% among Jews. By level of religiosity, the highest combined perception of risk is

among the religious/Haredi (45.2%) and the traditional (42.3%), while among the secular it is 38.9%. In both cases the differences are statistically significant ($p < 0.001$).

Table 7 — In international discussions of a post-war settlement in Gaza, Turkey could play a significant role. If this scenario materializes, what consequences do you think it would have for Israel?

Response	Total	Secular	Traditional	Religious/Haredi	Jewish sector	Arab sector
It would create serious threats to Israel's security and could strengthen forces hostile to Israel	36.7%	37.4%	41.9%	56%	42.6%	6.2%
It would create certain risks for Israel, but with international guarantees they could be limited and controlled	28.2%	35.7%	28%	18.1%	29.7%	20.5%
It would have no substantial effect on Israel's security or position	10%	7.2%	6.5%	7.8%	7.1%	25.5%
With international guarantees, Turkish involvement could help stabilize the situation in Gaza and, alongside the risks, bring Israel certain benefits	7.7%	6%	6.1%	7.2%	6.3%	15.5%
None of these	2.4%	1.2%	3.6%	0.6%	1.9%	5%
Don't know	14.9%	12.5%	14%	10.2%	12.5%	27.3%
<i>N</i>	<i>N=1007</i>	<i>N=401</i>	<i>N=279</i>	<i>N=166</i>	<i>N=846</i>	<i>N=161</i>

As Table 7 shows, Turkish involvement in a post-war settlement in Gaza is more often viewed through the lens of threats and risks. 36.7% believe it would create serious threats to Israel's security and could strengthen hostile forces, and a further 28.2% see certain risks that could be contained with international guarantees. The positive scenario, with possible benefits for Israel, is chosen by 7.7%, while 14.9% are unable to answer.

National differences are especially large: among Jews, 42.6% choose the serious-threats scenario, against 6.2% among Arabs; in the Arab sector, the share who see no substantial effect (25.5%) or who allow for a stabilizing effect with guarantees (15.5%) is markedly higher. By level of religiosity, the most alarmed position belongs to the religious/Haredi: 56.0% of this group speak of serious threats, against 37.4% among the secular and 41.9% among the traditional. Statistical testing confirms the significance of the differences ($p < 0.001$).

Table 8 — Amid possible discussions between the United States and Iran of a framework agreement on de-escalating regional tensions and a post-war settlement in the Middle East, the possibility has been raised that Turkey would gain a significant role in this process. What consequences do you think this might have for Israel?

Response	Total	Secular	Traditional	Religious/Haredi	Jewish sector	Arab sector
It would strengthen Turkey's position and could increase risks to Israel's security and the influence of Islamist forces hostile to Israel	39.3%	41.1%	41.9%	60.8%	45.3%	8.1%
A stronger Turkish role would create risks for Israel, but its cooperation with the U.S. could also open opportunities for regional stability	25.4%	31.9%	26.9%	16.9%	27.3%	15.5%

Response	Total	Secular	Traditional	Religious/Haredi	Jewish sector	Arab sector
It would have no substantial effect on Israel's position	9.7%	7.2%	6.5%	4.8%	6.5%	26.7%
A stronger Turkish role, in the framework of cooperation with the U.S., could promote regional stability and reduce tensions around Israel	6.5%	3.7%	4.7%	4.2%	4.1%	18.6%
None of these	2.5%	1.7%	3.6%	3%	2.6%	1.9%
Don't know	16.6%	14.2%	16.5%	10.2%	14.2%	29.2%
<i>N</i>	<i>N=1007</i>	<i>N=401</i>	<i>N=279</i>	<i>N=166</i>	<i>N=846</i>	<i>N=161</i>

In the broader regional scenario tied to a possible Turkish role amid U.S.–Iran negotiations (Table 8), the structure of responses is close to that of Table 7: the risk frame (the sum of responses pointing to increased risks for Israel's security) totals 64.7%, while the strongest-threat option — a stronger Turkey and rising risks for Israel — stands at 39.3%. 25.4% see risks but allow that Turkey's cooperation with the U.S. could open opportunities for regional stability. The share unable to answer is fairly high, at 16.6%.

Sectoral differences are again the strongest (statistically significant at $p < 0.001$): among Jews, 45.3% choose the most alarming scenario, against 8.1% among Arabs; among Arabs, the share who see no substantial effect (26.7%) or who see a possible contribution to stability (18.6%) is considerably higher. By level of religiosity, the religious/Haredi stand out in particular: 60.8% of this group speak of rising risks, while among the secular and the traditional the figures are close — 41.1% and 41.9%, a gap that still reaches significance ($p = 0.002$).

Table 9 — In recent years, disputes between Greece and Turkey have intensified in the Eastern Mediterranean and on other regional issues. What position do you think Israel should take regarding Greece and its disputes with Turkey?

Response	Total	Secular	Traditional	Religious/Haredi	Jewish sector	Arab sector
Israel should more actively support Greece in its disputes with Turkey	35.8%	38.4%	38.4%	44.6%	39.6%	16.1%
Israel should avoid involvement in the disputes between Greece and Turkey	41.3%	40.6%	40.9%	35.5%	39.7%	49.7%
Don't know	22.8%	20.9%	20.8%	19.9%	20.7%	34.2%
<i>N</i>	<i>N=1007</i>	<i>N=401</i>	<i>N=279</i>	<i>N=166</i>	<i>N=846</i>	<i>N=161</i>

A negative perception of Turkey does not automatically translate into support for a more confrontational line on the Greek front. Asked what position Israel should take regarding Greece and its disputes with Turkey (Table 9), 41.3% of respondents believe Israel should avoid involvement in the Greek–Turkish disputes, while 35.8% favor more active support for Greece. The share unable to answer is notable, at 22.8%.

Differences along national lines are statistically significant ($p < 0.001$) and well marked: among Jews, support for a more active pro-Greece line is 39.6%, against 16.1% among Arabs; the share unable to answer is also higher in the Arab sector (34.2%). By level of religiosity, the differences are not statistically significant.

Table 10 — Azerbaijan is one of Israel's closest partners in the Muslim world and, at the same time, a strategic partner of Turkey. In your view, how would Azerbaijan behave in the event of a conflict between Israel and Turkey?

Response	Total	Secular	Traditional	Religious/Haredi	Jewish sector	Arab sector
It would support Israel	16.5%	15.2%	21.1%	15.7%	17.3%	12.4%
It would try to remain neutral and non-involved	36.4%	39.7%	32.6%	38.6%	37.1%	32.9%
It would take an anti-Israel position	8.6%	7.7%	8.2%	12%	8.7%	8.1%
It would try to maneuver between the sides	14.7%	15%	14.3%	13.3%	14.4%	16.1%
Don't know	23.7%	22.4%	23.7%	20.5%	22.5%	30.4%
<i>N</i>	<i>N=1007</i>	<i>N=401</i>	<i>N=279</i>	<i>N=166</i>	<i>N=846</i>	<i>N=161</i>

As Table 10 shows, the most common expectation is neutrality and non-involvement on Azerbaijan's part: 36.4% of respondents take this view. Support for Israel is expected by 16.5%, maneuvering between the sides by 14.7%, and an anti-Israel position by 8.6%. The question is marked by a high level of uncertainty: 23.7% are unable to answer.

Group differences here are less sharp than on questions about Turkey itself. Among traditional respondents, the expectation of support for Israel is higher than among the secular and the religious/Haredi (21.1% versus 15.2% and 15.7%). Along national lines, Arab respondents are more often unable to answer (30.4% versus 22.5% among Jews), but the baseline neutrality scenario remains the most common in both sectors.

Conclusions

Overall, the results show that Turkey is perceived in Israeli public opinion primarily as a source of threats and risks to Israel's security, especially in the contexts of East Jerusalem, Gaza, and a regional settlement. 34.4% of respondents call Turkey a serious strategic threat, and a further 28.5% consider it an unfriendly country, though not a direct threat to Israel's security.

Yet anxiety does not equate to automatic support for a confrontational line: responses are dominated by a preference for control and restriction, and by a desire to avoid additional involvement in disputes (Greece and Turkey).

The main persistent dividing line runs between the Jewish and Arab sectors. The strongest differences between them appear on questions about the basic perception of Turkey, Turkey's activity in East Jerusalem, and Turkey's possible role in a regional settlement. Thus, 39.9% of Jews and 5.0% of Arabs regard Turkey as a serious strategic threat; strict control of Turkish activity in East Jerusalem is supported by 52.4% of Jews and 9.3% of Arabs; the most alarming scenario of a stronger Turkish role in the regional process is chosen by 45.3% of Jews and 8.1% of Arabs.

Differences by level of religiosity are most visible on questions related to threats and control. The religious/Haredi are more likely than others to call Turkey a serious strategic threat (44.6%), to favor a strict regime of restriction and control over Turkish activity in East Jerusalem (64.5%), and to see serious threats in a possible Turkish role in Gaza (56.0%) and in the regional process involving the U.S. and Iran (60.8%).

Questions about Turkey's role in Gaza, the regional settlement, and Azerbaijan's stance show an elevated level of uncertainty: the share unable to answer is 14.9%, 16.6%, and 23.7%, respectively. The especially high uncertainty on the Azerbaijan question indicates that this topic is less familiar to the broad audience than the direct questions about Turkey and East Jerusalem.

In the scenario questions, respondents more often choose cautious or alarmed options than positive ones. At the same time, part of the responses register not only a stark perception of threats but also a pragmatic disposition: 28.2% allow that the risks of Turkish involvement in Gaza could be contained with international guarantees, and 25.4% see in Turkey's cooperation with the U.S. both risks and potential opportunities for regional stability.

Footnotes

1. The index was calculated using the formula $(n1 + n2) - (n3 + n4)$, where $n1$ is the value of the response "Follows regularly," $n2$ is "Follows occasionally," $n3$ is "Follows rarely," and $n4$ is "Does not follow at all."
2. The index was calculated using the formula $(n1 + n2) - (n3 + n4)$, where $n1$ is the value of the response "...friendly country...," $n2$ is "...both cooperation and friction are possible...," $n3$ is "...unfriendly country," and $n4$ is "...serious strategic threat."
3. The index was calculated using the formula $(n1 + n2) - (n3 + n4)$, where $n1$ is the value of the response "Very positive," $n2$ is "Somewhat positive," $n3$ is "Somewhat negative," and $n4$ is "Very negative."
4. The index was calculated using the formula $(n1 + n2) - (n3 + n4)$, where $n1$ is the value of the response "Very positive," $n2$ is "Somewhat positive," $n3$ is "Somewhat negative," and $n4$ is "Very negative."
5. The index was calculated using the formula $(n1 + n2) - (n3 + n4)$, where $n1$ is the value of the response "There is a very high risk," $n2$ is "There is a fairly high risk," $n3$ is "There is a fairly low risk," and $n4$ is "There is no risk at all."