ZU-LAT Equality and Human Rights

Reichman University Institute for Liberty & Responsibility

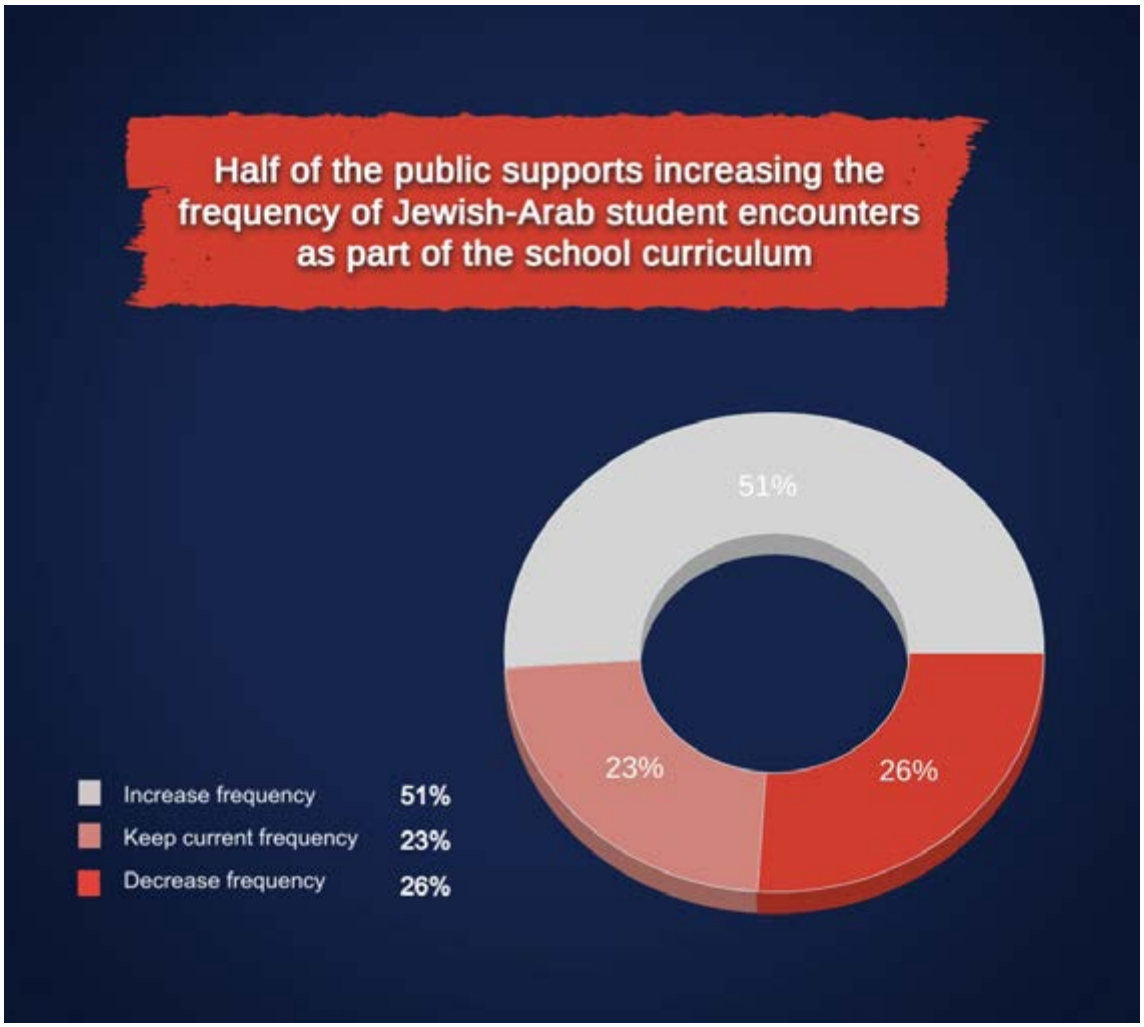
HUMAN RIGHTS INDEX

FINDINGS OF SURVEY NO.3
JULY 2022

The majority of the Arab public supports increasing the frequency of meetings between Jewish and Arab students, compared to only half of the Jewish public

The third survey was conducted with the collaboration of Reichman University's Institute for Liberty and Responsibility, by iPanel, an online data collection firm, on 26-30 May 2022 among 1,516 respondents (1,256 Jews and 260 Arabs) over the age of 18 who completed the questionnaire. The maximum margin of error for the entire sample was 2.5%, with a 95% confidence level. The Jewish respondents constitute a representative sample of Israel's adult Jewish population according to gender, age group, area of residence, and degree of religiosity (based on Central Bureau of Statistics data). The Arab respondents constitute a sample closely representing Israel's adult Arab population according to gender, age group, area of residence, and degree of religiosity, with a slight lack of sampling of male respondents, respondents from Israel's southern region, and respondents over the age of 40.

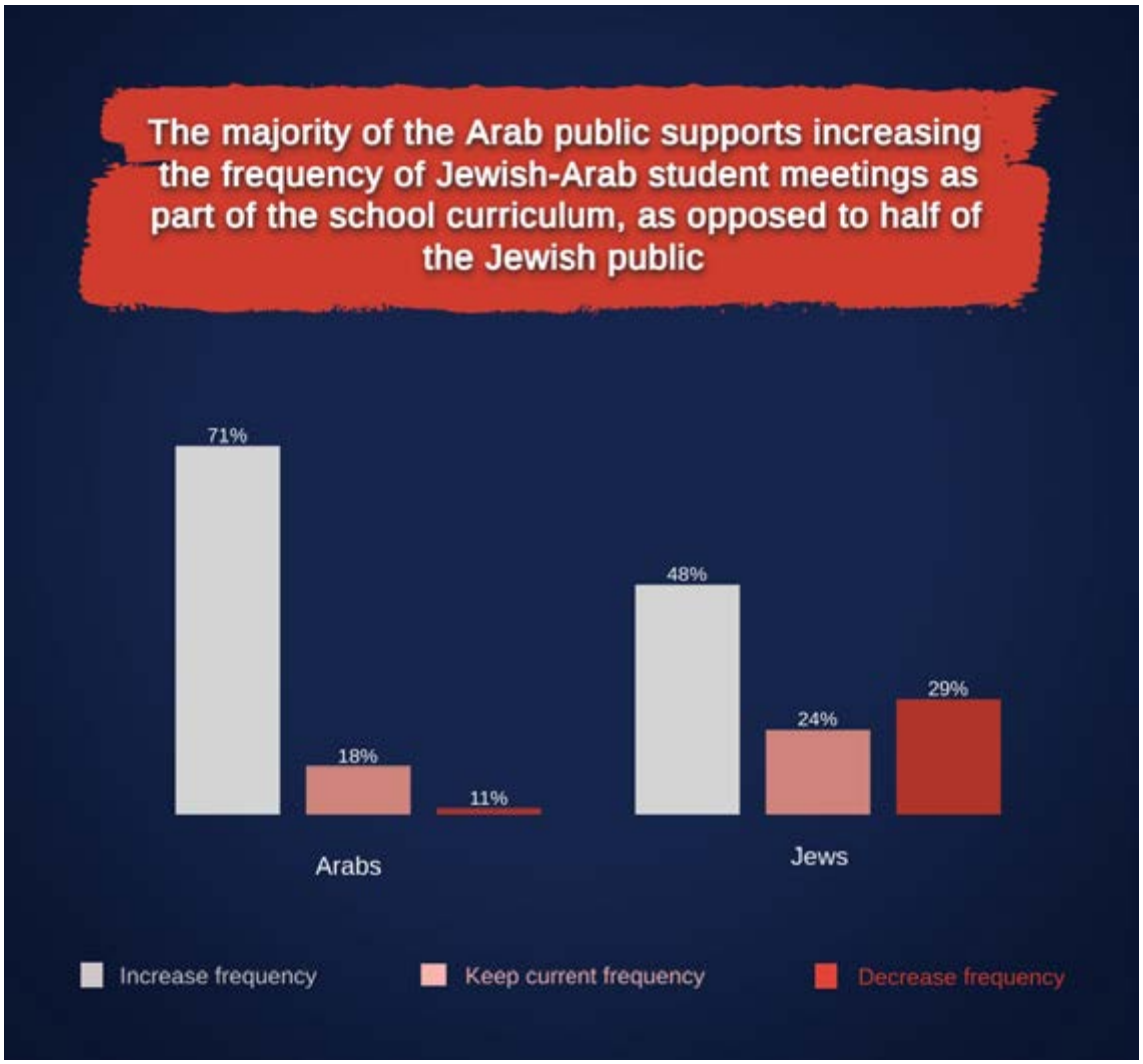
The survey dealt with the issue of encounters between Jewish and Arab students in Israel as means of promoting dialogue in the education system. The participants were asked whether the latter should take steps to increase or decrease the frequency of encounters between Jewish and Arab students as part of the school curriculum. An analysis of the responses shows that among those with an opinion on the matter (that is, minus 9% of the respondents who answered "do not know")[1], 26% thought the frequency of meetings should somewhat decrease (19% said "largely decrease" and 7% said "decrease to some extent"); 23% thought their frequency should be kept at the current level, while 51% thought it should somewhat increaes (29% said "increase to some extent" and 23% said "largely increase").[2]



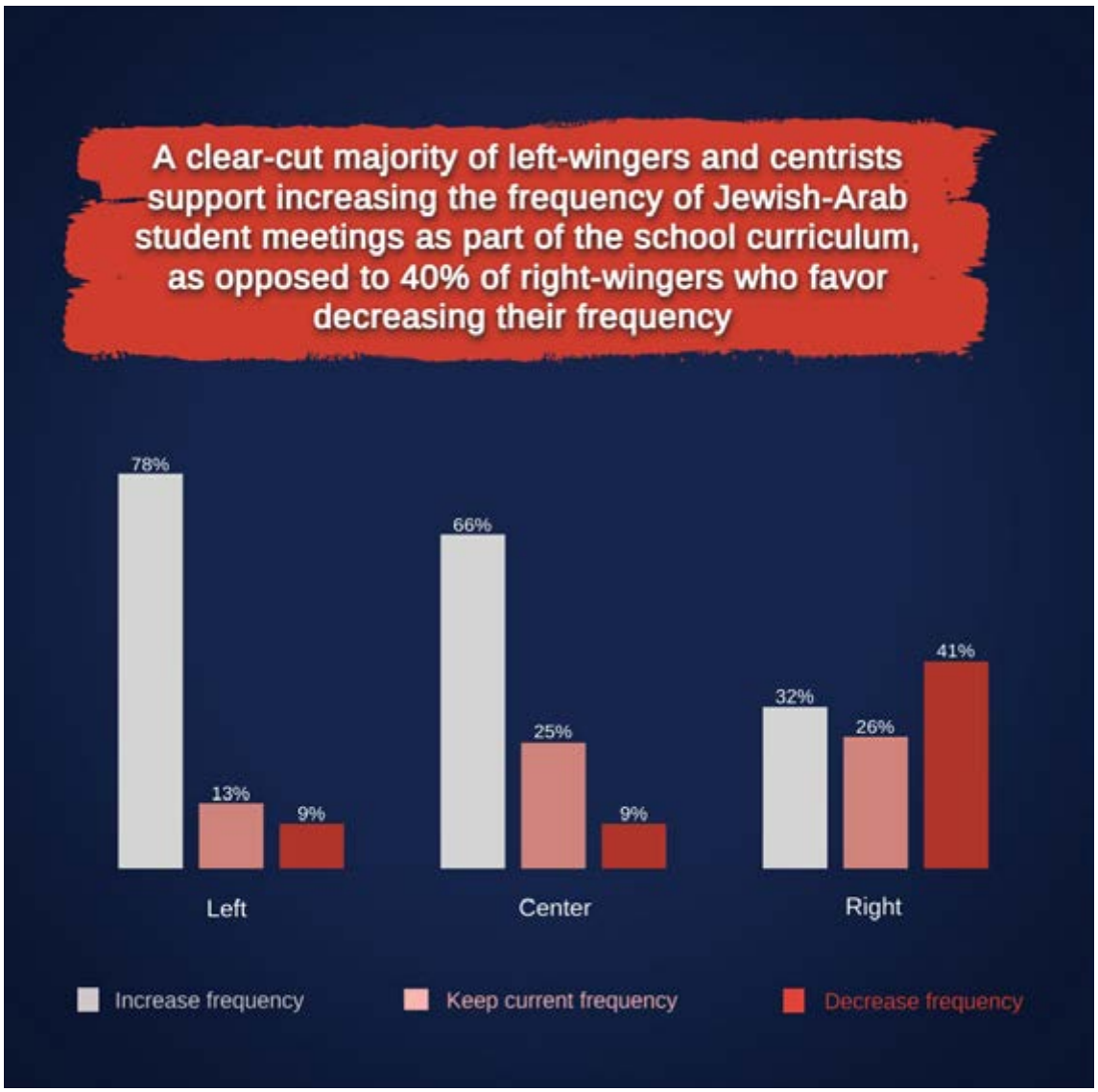
1 As the findings are presented without decimal fractions, the total sometimes does not add up to 100%.

2 Answer options: largely increase; increase to some extent; keep the current frequency; decrease to some extent; largely decrease; do not know.

In addition, among Arab respondents, 71% thought the frequency of Jewish-Arab student encounters as part of the school curriculum should increase to some extent, compared with only 48% of Jewish respondents who thought so. Only 11% of Arab respondents thought the frequency of these meetings should decrease to some extent, compared to 29% of Jewish respondents.



As might be expected, the answer to this question showed great differences between respondents who identified as right-wing and respondents who identified as left-wing, but the most interesting finding concerns the position of centrists. Among right-wingers, 41% thought the frequency of meetings should decrease to some extent, and only 32% thought it should increase. In contrast, among leftists and centrists, only 9% thought it should decrease to some extent, with 78% of leftists and 66% of centrists saying their frequency should increase.



This answer places the issue of a dialogue and encounters between Jewish and Arab students in the education system at the center of the public's political positions, in a way that can help promote such initiatives and increase their public legitimacy.

Examining the issue of Jewish-Arab student encounters is essential to the possibility of promoting equality between Israel's Jewish and Arab citizens. As is well known, the education system has been separate for Arabs and Jews since the establishment of the state. This separation, which is almost taken for granted, is national and linguistic, as well as a result of the geographical differentiation between the two groups.

Any move to eradicate institutionalized discrimination against the Palestinian citizens of Israel must be reflected not only in a legitimate demand for equal budgets, but also in an active effort to respect and recognize the history and memory of a minority. Accordingly, the long-standing policy of separation requires an active initiative for unmediated encounters between Jewish and Arab students, in order to help them overcome negative barriers and stereotypes and become familiar with different narratives. Such a joint dialogue is essential for creating a universe of egalitarian concepts, beyond building contacts between students.