KONRAD ADENAUER STIFTUNG

FACTS, FIGURES AND EVERYTHING YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT ELECTIONS IN ISRAEL.



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A 4-PART SERIES ON:

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HOW THE ELECTION IS ORGANIZED



02

HOW ELECTIONS ARE HELD



03

WHO IS ELECTED



04

ELECTION RESULTS



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ELECTION SYSTEM IN ISRAEL

HOW THE ELECTION IS ORGANIZED





ELECTION DAY

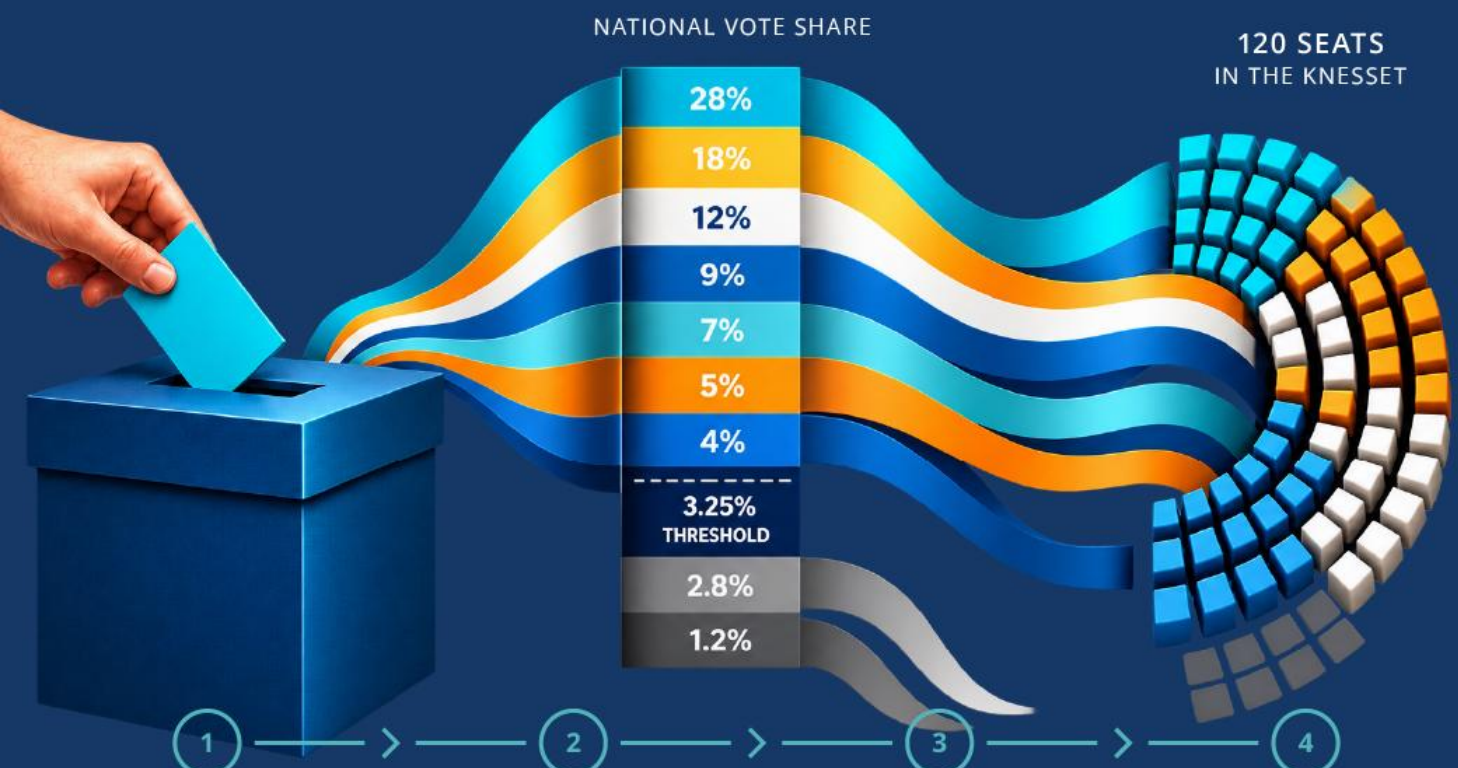
Tuesday
27 October 2026

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ELECTION SYSTEM IN ISRAEL: **HOW THE ELECTION IS ORGANIZED**

YOU DON'T VOTE FOR A PERSON.
YOU VOTE FOR A PARTY.

You have one vote — for a party, not a person. Each party's share of the national vote determines its share of Knesset seats.



1 **YOUR PARTY CHOICE**
You choose one party on the ballot.

2 **NATIONAL VOTE**
Your vote joins millions of others across Israel.

3 **VOTE SHARE**
Each party gets a share of the national vote.

4 **KNESSET SEATS**
Vote shares determine how many of the 120 Knesset seats each party receives.

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ELECTION SYSTEM IN ISRAEL: **HOW THE ELECTION IS ORGANIZED**

NOT EVERY PARTY MAKES IT IN.

THE 3.25% THRESHOLD.

A party must receive at least **3.25%** of the valid votes to enter the Knesset.



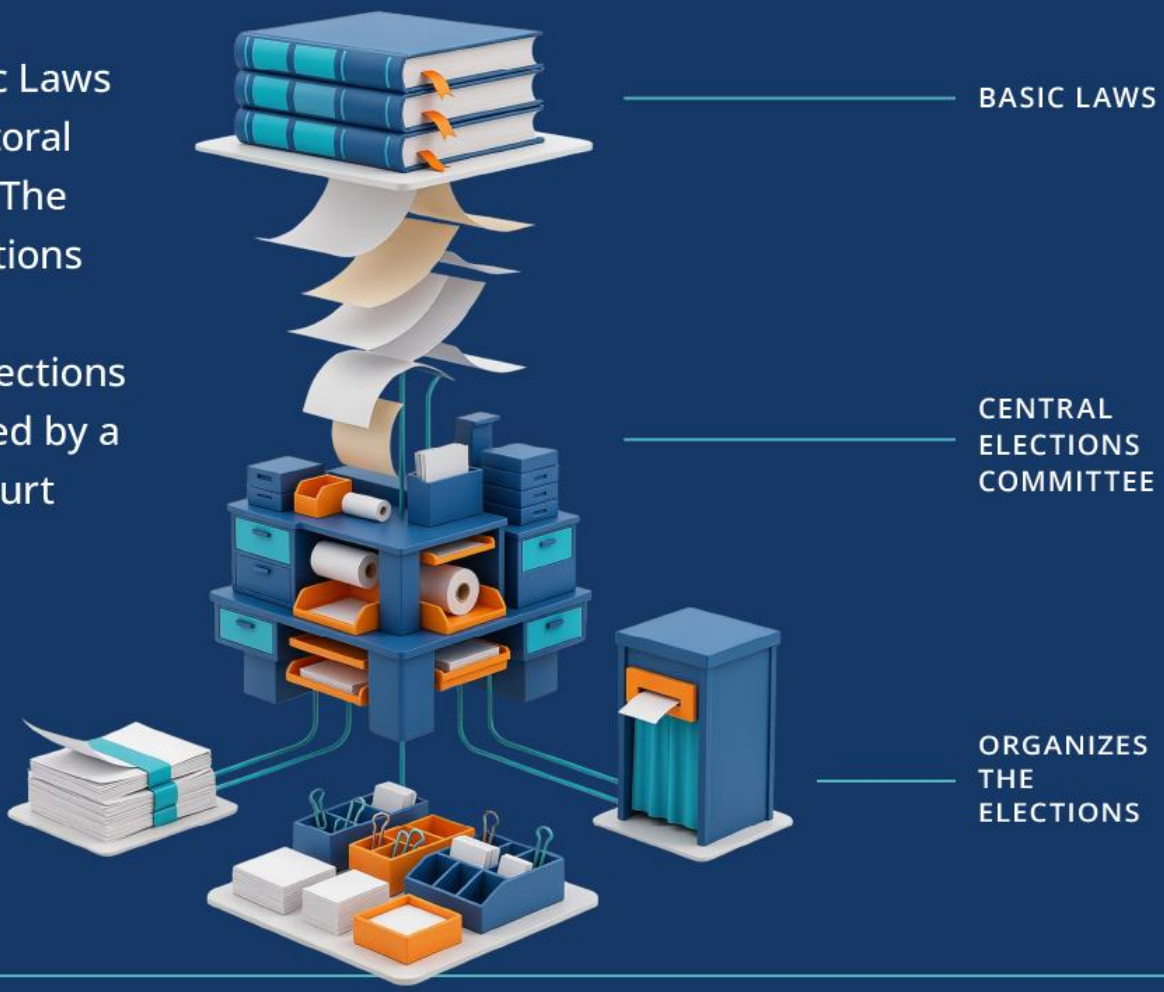
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ELECTION SYSTEM IN ISRAEL: **HOW THE ELECTION IS ORGANIZED**

WHO ORGANIZES THE ELECTION?

THE CENTRAL ELECTIONS COMMITTEE.

Israel's Basic Laws set the electoral framework. The Central Elections Committee organizes elections and is headed by a Supreme Court justice.



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ELECTION SYSTEM IN ISRAEL: **HOW THE ELECTION IS ORGANIZED**

ABROAD ON ELECTION DAY?

YOU USUALLY CAN'T VOTE.



Postal voting is allowed only in exceptional cases including diplomats. Ordinary citizens can only vote in person at a ballot box.

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ELECTION SYSTEM IN ISRAEL: **HOW THE ELECTION IS ORGANIZED**

ONE COUNTRY.
ONE CONSTITUENCY.

Israel uses nationwide proportional representation. The entire country is a single electoral district, and all Israelis vote on the same party lists instead of local candidates.



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ELECTION SYSTEM IN ISRAEL

HOW ELECTIONS ARE HELD



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ELECTION SYSTEM IN ISRAEL: **HOW ELECTIONS ARE HELD**

WHY TUESDAY? IT'S ELECTION DAY.

National elections in Israel almost always take place on a Tuesday. **Election Day is a legal holiday.**

WHY TUESDAY?
Historically, Tuesday gave rural voters enough time to reach polling places without violating the Jewish Sabbath.



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ELECTION SYSTEM IN ISRAEL: **HOW ELECTIONS ARE HELD**

NO CHECKBOX. PICK A SLIP.



Instead of marking a ballot, voters choose a party slip, place it in an envelope, and cast it in the ballot box. Parties are identified by **1–3 Hebrew letters**.

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SPECIAL POLLING STATIONS MAKE VOTING MORE ACCESSIBLE.

Special polling arrangements allow eligible voters to cast their ballots in places such as hospitals.



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ELECTION SYSTEM IN ISRAEL: **HOW ELECTIONS ARE HELD**

NOT EVERYONE HAS A POLLING PLACE NEARBY.

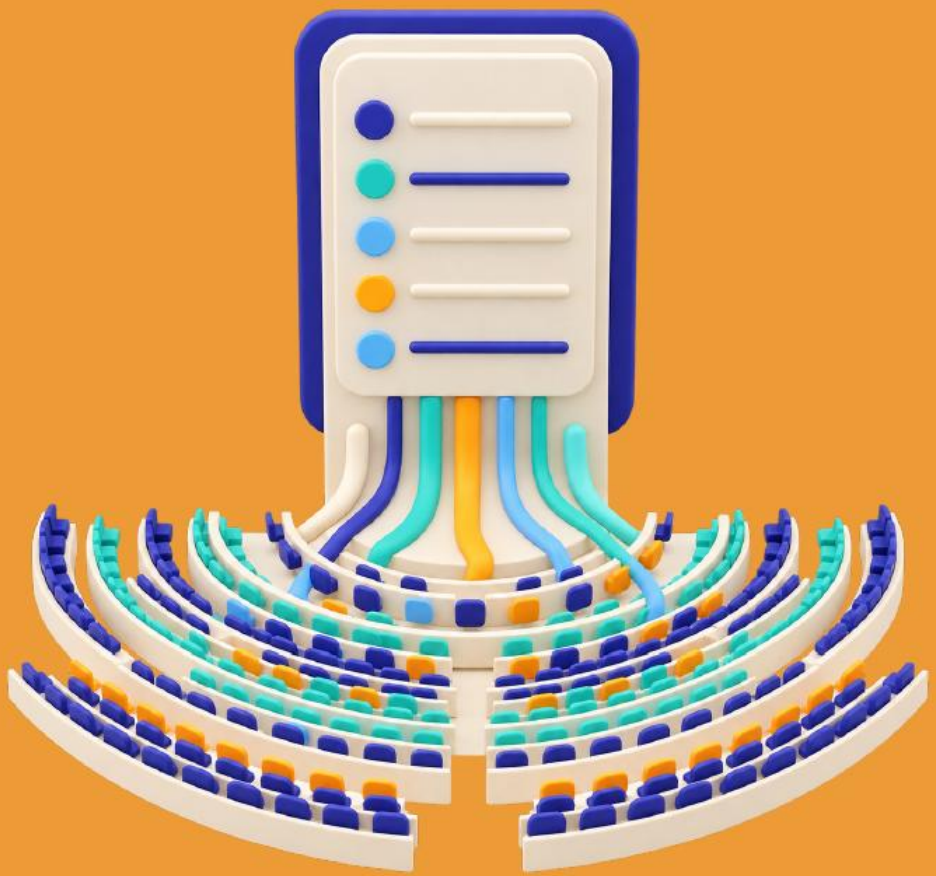
For some Israelis, voting can require **longer journeys**. Some communities have no polling place, so voters must travel to designated locations.



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ELECTION SYSTEM IN ISRAEL

WHO IS ELECTED.



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ELECTION SYSTEM IN ISRAEL: **WHO IS ELECTED**

120 SEATS. ONE KNESSET.



Israel's parliament, the Knesset, has 120 seats —
a number linked to the Great Assembly of ancient Jewish tradition.

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ELECTION SYSTEM IN ISRAEL: **WHO IS ELECTED**

YOU ELECT A LIST. PEOPLE STILL MATTER.



Voters choose party lists, not individual candidates. **However**, Israeli politics became highly personalized, with party leaders playing an outsized role in campaigns.

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ELECTION SYSTEM IN ISRAEL: **WHO IS ELECTED**

WHO GETS ON THE LIST? DEPENDS ON THE PARTY.



Each party sets its own rules for choosing candidates. Some use primaries, while others give party leaders or internal bodies greater control over the list.

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ELECTION SYSTEM IN ISRAEL: **WHO IS ELECTED**

CAMPAIGNS GET PUBLIC FUNDING.

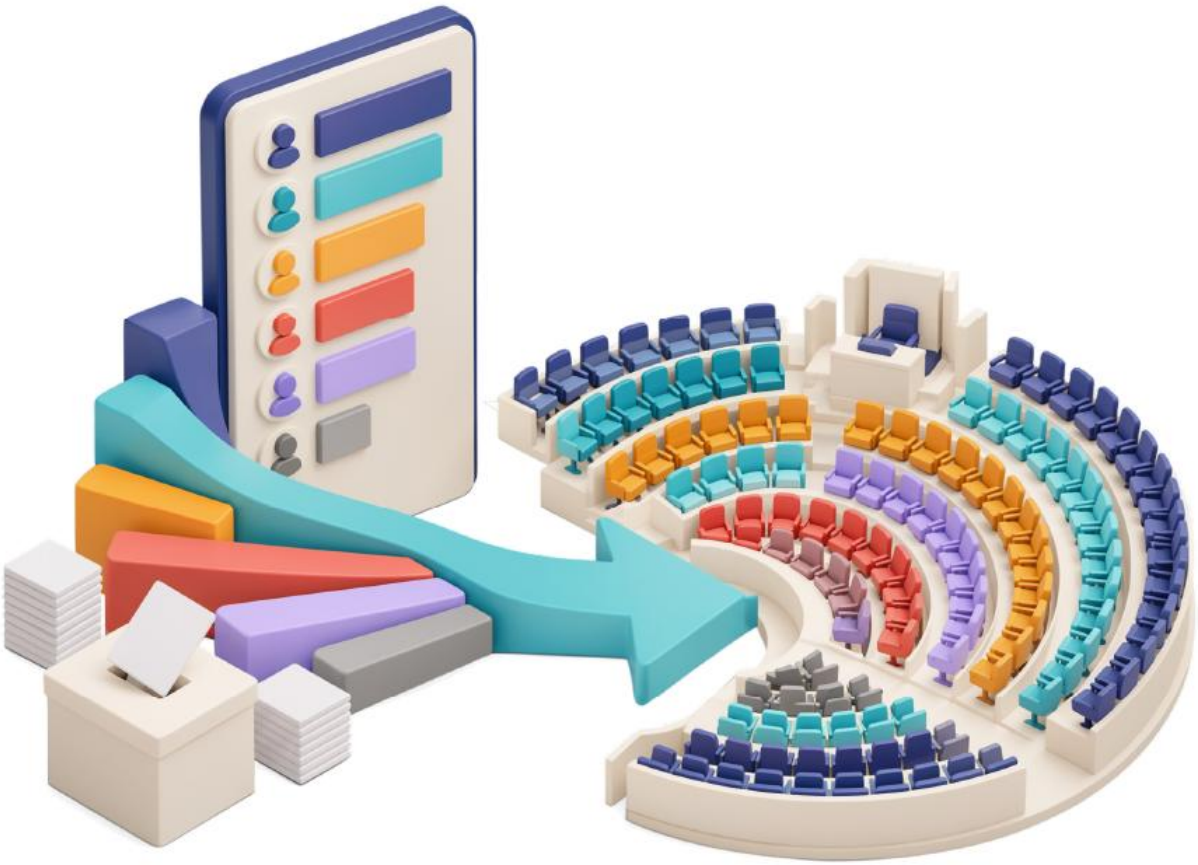


Political parties receive public funding linked to their representation in the Knesset. Private individuals may also donate, but companies may not.

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ELECTION RESULTS.



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ELECTION SYSTEM IN ISRAEL: **ELECTION RESULTS**

MOST VOTES ≠GOVERNMENT.

The party with the most votes does not automatically lead a new government coalition. A government needs the support of a majority in the 120-seat Knesset — usually through a coalition.



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5 ELECTIONS.
LESS THAN 4 YEARS.

Between April 2019 and November 2022,
Israelis went to the polls **five times**.

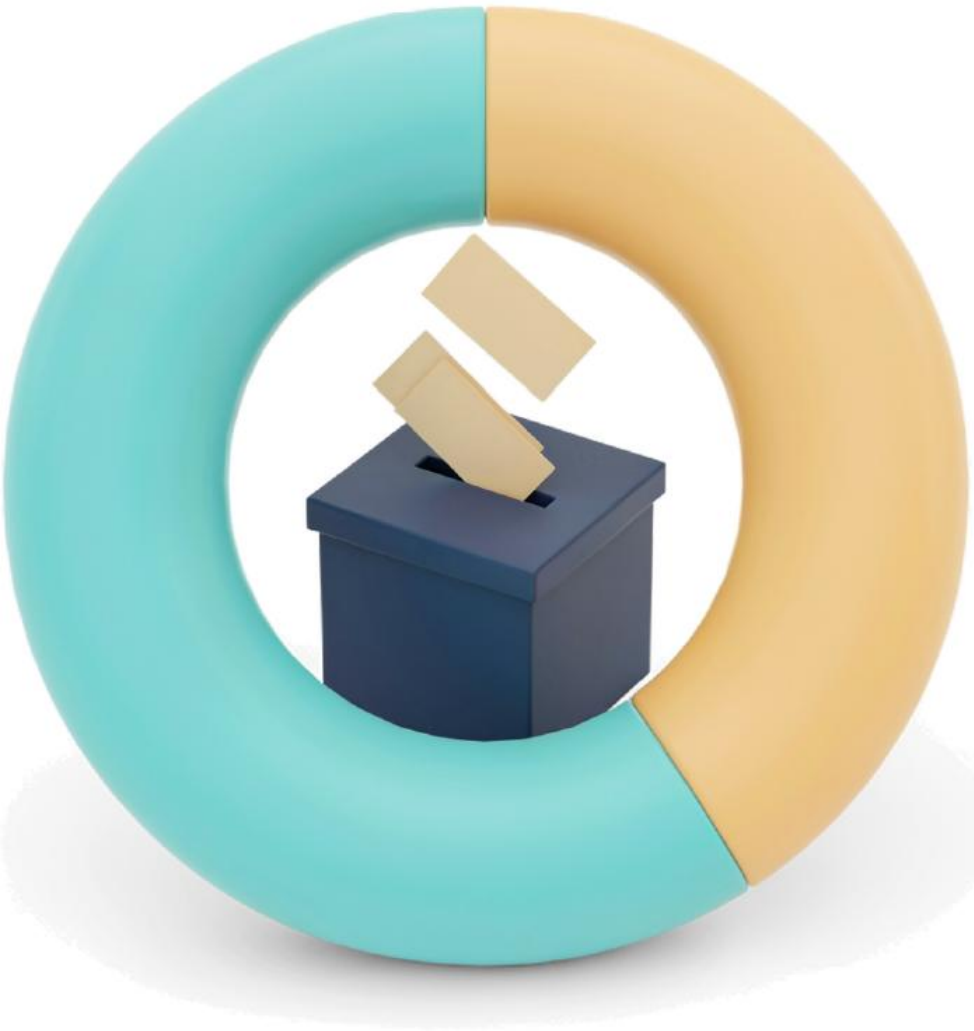


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ELECTION SYSTEM IN ISRAEL: **ELECTION RESULTS**

70.6%
TURNOUT IN 2022.

Nearly 4.8 million Israelis voted in the 2022 Knesset election — a turnout of 70.6%



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ELECTION SYSTEM IN ISRAEL: **ELECTION RESULTS**

SOME VOTES CAN BE POOLED.

SURPLUS-VOTE AGREEMENTS.

Two parties can sign a **surplus-vote agreement** before an election. When the remaining Knesset seats are allocated, they are considered together — which can help the pair **gain an additional seat**.



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ELECTION SYSTEM IN ISRAEL: **ELECTION RESULTS**

WHO GETS THE MANDATE?

THE PRESIDENT ASSIGNS IT.

After consulting the Knesset factions,
Israel's president assigns a member of Knesset
the task of forming a government.



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ELECTION SYSTEM IN ISRAEL: **ELECTION RESULTS**

PARTIES CAN APPEAR — AND DISAPPEAR.

Israel's party landscape changes frequently.
New parties **emerge**, existing parties **split** or **merge**,
and others **disappear** from the Knesset.



emerge **split** **merge** **disappear**