

American Favorability of Israel Drops to Record Low

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October 2026

Once an enduring area of bipartisan consensus, American support for Israel has shifted dramatically in the three years since Hamas' October 7 attack on the country. Israel's subsequent war in Gaza and its participation in the unpopular joint US-Israeli war against Iran has cooled American sentiment toward Israel to its lowest point in Chicago Council polling since 1978.

While Republicans continue to express support, majorities of Democrats and Independents now prefer to reduce or cut US military assistance to the US' closest partner in the Middle East. These results help explain why some candidate's positions on Israel have become a lightning rod in Democratic primary and midterm contests.

Key Findings

- Americans overall give Israel an average rating of 44 degrees on a 0-100 thermometer scale (where zero represents a cold, unfavorable view and 100 is the warmest reading possible)—the lowest level recorded in Council polls dating back to 1978.
- For the first time, more than half of Americans (a combined 56%) say US military aid to Israel should be either decreased (21%) or stopped altogether (35%), up considerably from 2012 when a combined 38 percent said the same.
- Consistent with earlier polling, a majority of the US public believes the United States should not take a side in the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians (56%), with the remaining balance leaning toward taking Israel's side (28%) over the Palestinians' (14%).
- That said, more Democrats now than ever before prefer the United States side with the Palestinians (27% vs. 9% Israel).

Americans Express Coolest Feelings Toward Israel on Record

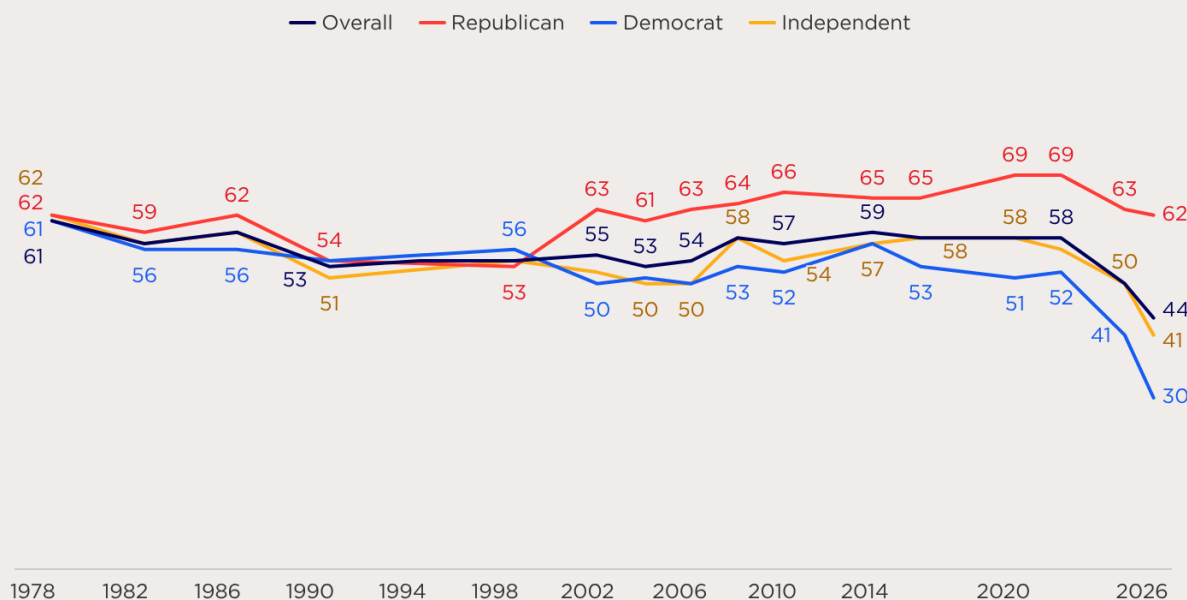
US support for Israel has been an enduring and bipartisan component of US foreign policy. Starting in the early 2000s, Republican Party supporters began to express even warmer feelings toward the country, perhaps sensing a shared threat from terrorism following the September 11 attacks and [political alignment between GOP politicians and Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu](#). Evangelical voters, who have [a key religious interest in supporting Israel](#), also became a [larger portion of the GOP's voting base](#) over the course of that time.

Comparatively, Democrats maintained slightly warm views toward Israel during this period, though at lower levels than Republicans. In recent years, however, Israel's war in Gaza and the unpopular US-Israeli war in Iran have led to a downward trend in Democratic support for Israel—resulting in very large partisan divides on opinions toward the country.

On average, Americans now give Israel a record-low rating of 44 degrees on a thermometer scale where 100 represents a very warm, favorable feeling, and zero represents a very cold, unfavorable feeling. This rating follows a steady decline in favorable views toward Israel since 2022 (at which point, Americans gave Israel an average rating of 58). Today, Americans see Israel among the likes of India (average rating of 51), Saudi Arabia (41), and China (39), but more favorably than countries like Russia (26) and Iran (23).

Favorability toward Israel

Please rate your feelings toward some countries and peoples, with 100 meaning a very warm, favorable feeling, zero meaning a very cold, unfavorable feeling, and 50 meaning not particularly warm or cold. You can use any number from zero to 100; the higher the number the more favorable your feelings are toward that country or those people. **Israel** (mean)



July 10-21, 2026 | n=2,156

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Democratic sentiment toward Israel has declined to a greater degree than other partisans, dropping from an average rating of 52 in 2022 to just 30 today (a decline of 22 points in just four years). While favorable views of Israel among Republicans and Independents have also declined since 2022, they have done so to a lesser degree (from 69 to 62 points among Republicans and from 56 to 41 points among Independents). The current difference between Republicans and Democrats on favorability toward Israel has reached its highest point ever, with a 32-percentage point gap between the partisans.

As several primary contests have illuminated, there are some [key segments within each party](#) that offer even more pronounced impressions. MAGA Republicans express the most favorable view of Israel, giving the country an average rating of 67 compared to 55 among non-MAGA Republicans.¹ Among

¹ Respondents in Chicago Council Surveys are asked to self-identify as supporters of the Democratic or Republican Parties, or as Independents. However, to better understand the different movements within each party, partisans are divided into subgroups. Democrats are divided according to their self-described ideological leanings toward liberal versus a combination of moderate or conservative Democrats. In the 2026 Chicago Council Survey, 62 percent of Democrats identify as liberal to some degree (13% extremely liberal, 33% liberal, 17% slightly liberal), while 37 percent identify as moderate (30%) or conservative to some degree (7%). For analytical purposes, we combine moderate and

Democrats, those who identify as liberal (27) offer more chilly ratings of Israel than those who say they are moderate and conservative (34). There are also generational differences. Generation Z and Millennial Republicans express less favorable views toward Israel (48 on average vs. 65 among Generation X, Boomers, and Silent Generation). Similarly, Millennial and Generation Z Democrats give Israel a lower rating than older generations of Democrats (21 vs. 33).

Six in 10 Americans Say Israel Less Globally Respected than A Decade Ago

In addition to expressing more negative feelings toward Israel, a majority of Americans also think the country has lost international respect. Six in 10 Americans (59%) now believe that Israel is respected less in the world, compared to just 26 percent who said the same in 2021.

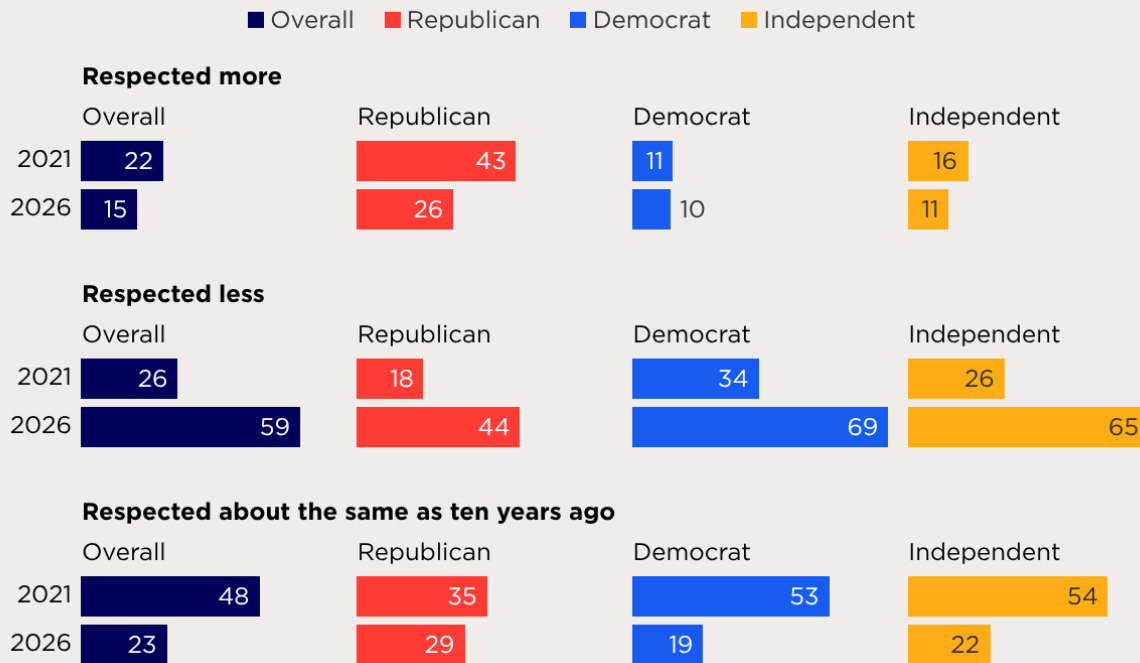
At least two-thirds of Independents (65%) and Democrats (69%) say Israel has lost respect, including 78 percent of liberal Democrats and 56 percent of moderate and conservative Democrats. While a less prevalent view among Republicans, a plurality of GOP supporters also characterize Israel as having lost respect (44%) on the world stage, though fewer MAGA Republicans feel this way (39% than non-MAGA Republicans (53%).

These declines also reflect Americans' recent perceptions of Israel's role in the Middle East. In [May 2026](#), Americans judged Israel's role in resolving the key challenges facing the Middle East negatively (64%, up from 54% in 2024), while just a third believed it had a positive influence (31%, down from 39%). Partisan divisions are evident as well. Six in 10 Republicans saw Israel's regional role as a positive one (58%) compared to just a third of Independents (26%) and less than two in 10 Democrats (14%).

conservative Democrats into one group for intraparty analyses. Republicans are divided into MAGA Republicans (the 61% of self-identified Republicans who also say they are part of the MAGA movement) and non-MAGA Republicans (the 37% who say they are not part of the MAGA movement).

Israel's Respect in the World

*Do you think that the following countries are respected more in the world today than they were ten years ago, are respected more, or are respected about as much now as ten years ago? **Israel** (%)*



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Sharp Drop in Support for US Military Aid to Israel

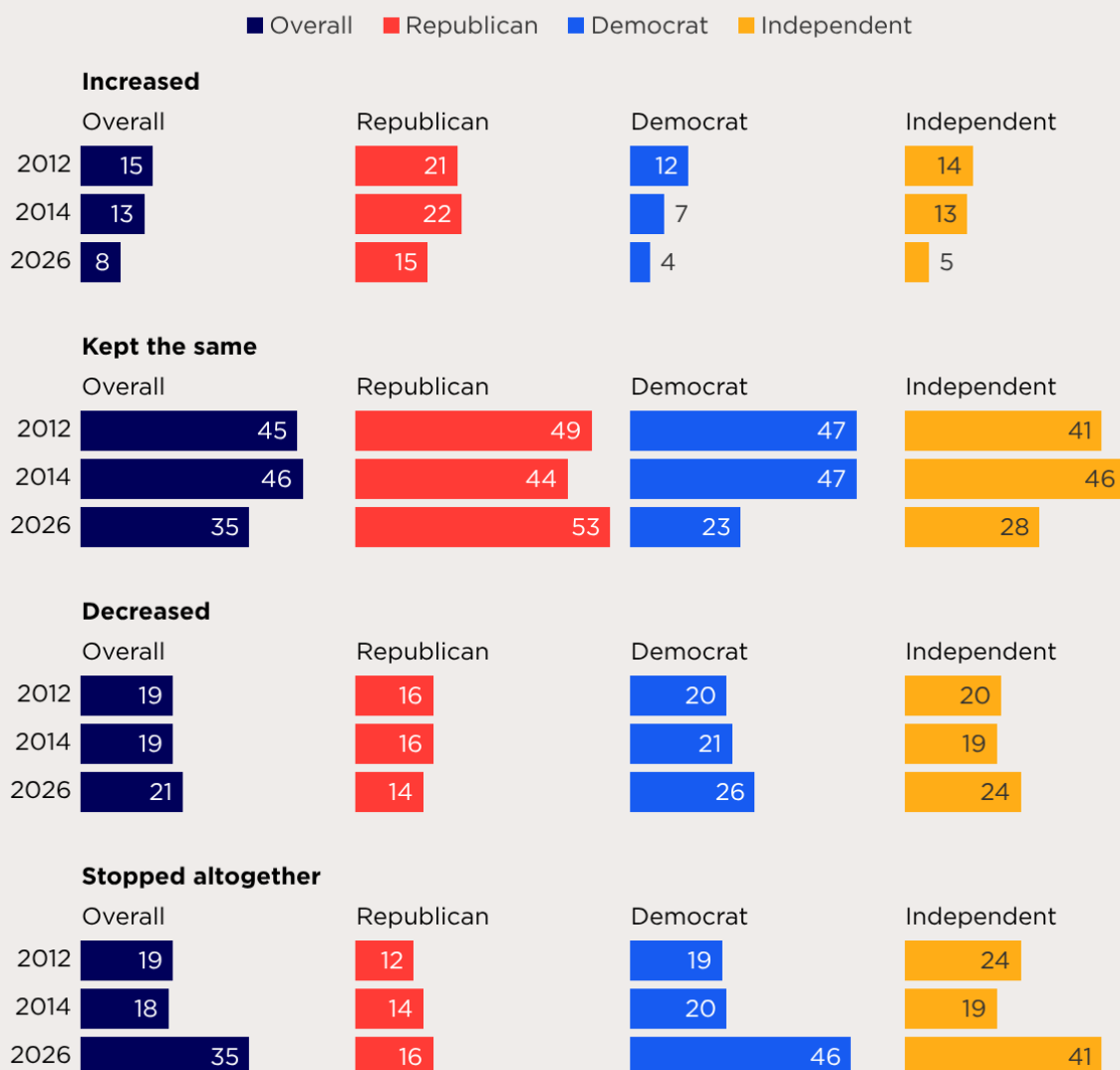
Israel has been [the largest cumulative recipient of US foreign aid](#) since its founding in 1948, including military assistance. In fact, since the start of Israel's war in Gaza in 2023, both the Biden and Trump administrations have committed [more than \\$21.7 billion](#) combined to bolster Israel's defense and military operations.

For their part, Americans have become less supportive of US military aid to Israel over the past decade. Today, a combined majority (56%) of Americans say US military aid to the country should be either decreased (21%) or stopped altogether (35%), up considerably from when first asked in 2012 (combined 38% agreed). On the other hand, a combined 43 percent favor continuing the same level of aid to Israel (35%) or increasing it (8%), down considerably since first asked in 2012 (60% combined).

These changes have been driven primarily by shifts among Democrats and Independents. More than a decade ago, pluralities of all partisans supported maintaining the level of military aid sent to Israel. Over time, Democrats and Independents have grown more likely to think this assistance should be decreased or stopped altogether, while Republicans continue to think it should remain the same.

Views on Military Aid to Israel

Do you think military aid to Israel should be increased, decreased, kept the same or stopped altogether?



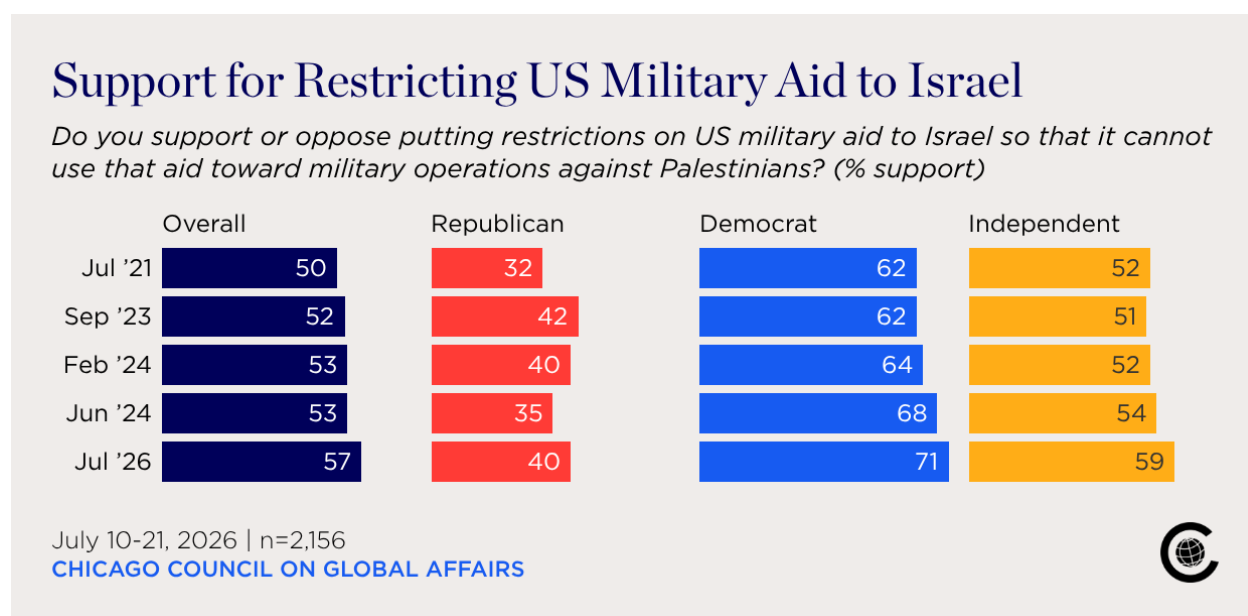
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CHICAGO COUNCIL SURVEYS



Liberal Democrats are much more likely to think military aid to Israel should be decreased or stopped (82%) than moderate or conservative Democrats (58%). Similarly, MAGA Republicans are more likely than non-MAGA Republicans to say it should be increased or kept the same (73% vs. 59%).

Slight Increase in Support for Restrictions That Prevent Use of US Aid Against Palestinians

Since the Council first asked in 2021, at least half of Americans have said they would support restrictions on US military aid to Israel to ensure it would not be used in Israeli operations against Palestinians. This percentage has now risen to 57 percent (up from 53% in 2024), the highest number of Americans yet recorded in Council polling. Six in 10 Independents (59%) and seven in 10 Democrats (71%) support these restrictions, compared to four in 10 Republicans (40%).



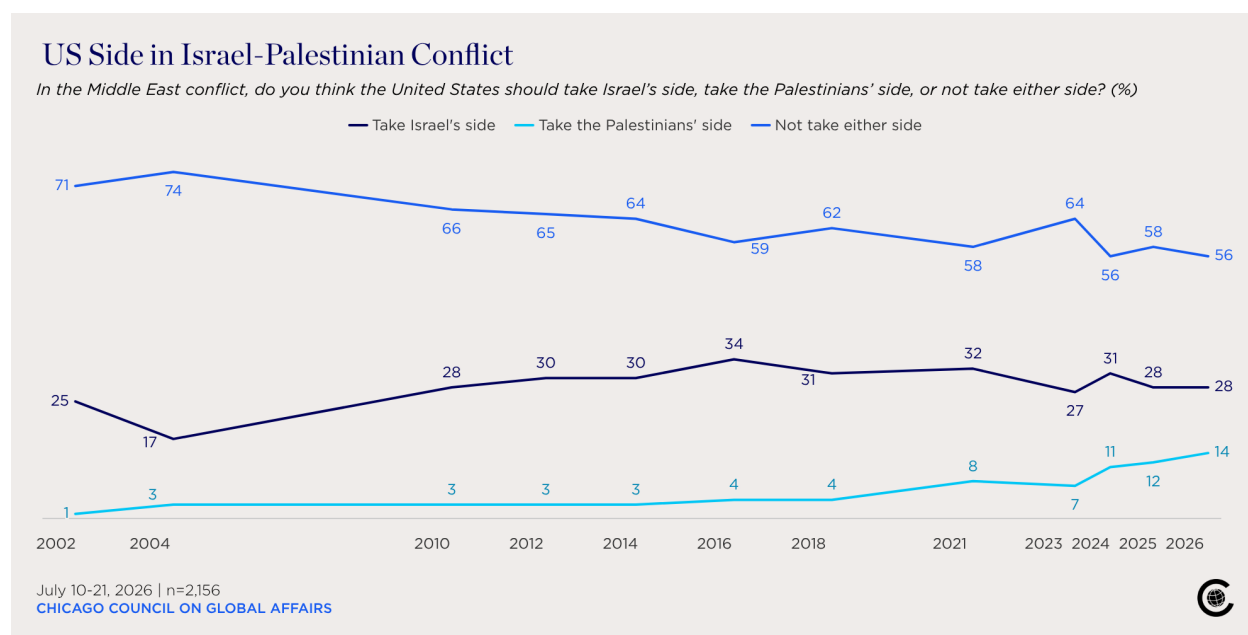
Consistent with other results, liberal Democrats tend to support restrictions on US military aid to Israel more than moderate or conservative Democrats (80% vs. 58%). Republican factions are similarly divided but to a lesser degree: Non-MAGA Republicans are 10 percentage points more likely than MAGA Republicans to support restricting military aid to Israel (47% vs. 37%).²

² Aside from decreasing support for US military aid to Israel, [a 2024 Council poll](#) found that fewer Americans were willing to help defend Israel with US troops if Israel was attacked by its neighbors. In fact, at that point (after Israel's extensive action in Gaza in response to the October 7, 2023, Hamas attacks on Israel), US public support for helping Israel defend itself if its neighbors attacked had declined to its lowest point since the Council first asked the

Majority Continue to Say United States Should Not Take a Side In Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

As they have over the past 20 years, Americans continue to believe the United States should not take either side in the Israel-Palestinian conflict, though a smaller majority feel that way today (56%) than in previous years. The remaining balance leans toward taking Israel's side (28%, consistent with recent surveys) over the Palestinian's (14%, though it appears to be growing from 1% in 2002 to 14% in 2026).

About half of Republicans (45%) and majorities of Democrats (62%) and Independents (60%) think the United States should remain unbiased in the conflict. These percentages have steadily declined over time (by about 10 percentage points for Republicans and even more for Democrats and Independents (see appendix figure 1). A narrow majority of Republicans (53%) and a quarter of Independents (24%) say it would be best for the United States to favor Israel over the Palestinians (2% Republicans, 15% Independents). By contrast, Democrats are more likely now than ever before in Council polling to prefer the United States side with the Palestinians (27% vs. 9% Israel).



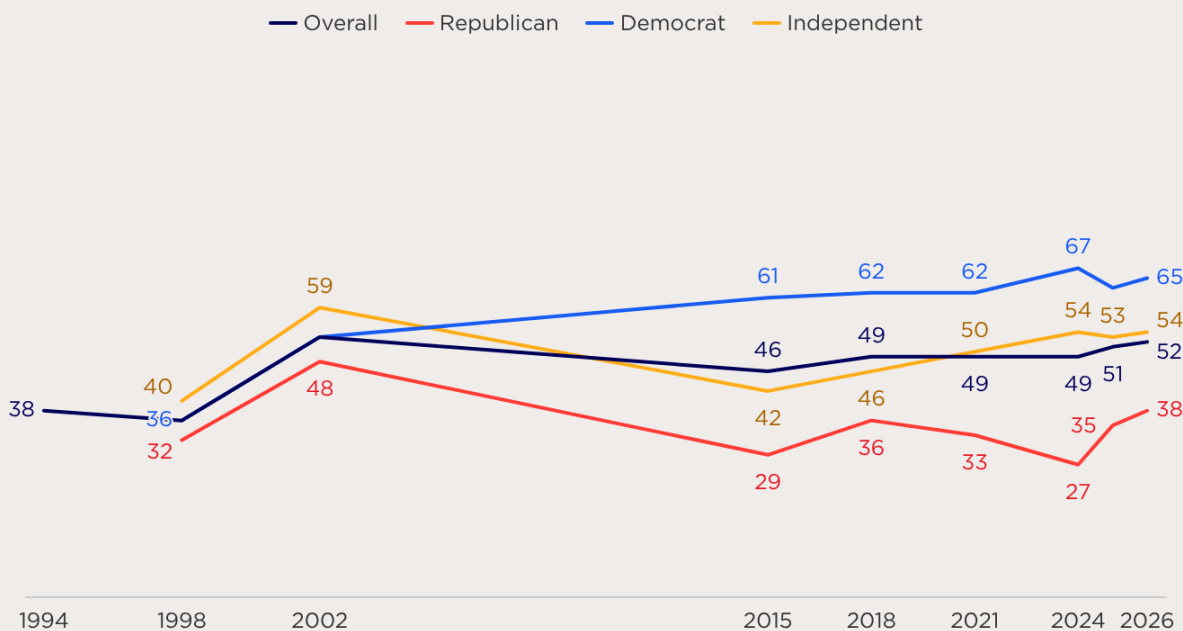
question in 2010. Four in 10 Americans overall favored sending US troops to defend Israel if attacked by its neighbors (41%, down from 53% in 2021).

Half of Americans Continue to Support a Palestinian State

While some Americans have expressed greater sympathy toward the Palestinians over time, the US public's views on an independent Palestinian state are remarkably stable. Since 2002, roughly half of Americans have consistently expressed support for the establishment of an independent Palestinian state in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip (currently at 52%, with 41% opposed). As in past years, Democrats are most on board (65% favor) followed by Independents (54% favor, 38% oppose). Broadly consistent with past readings, a majority of Republicans continue to oppose an independent Palestinian state (56%).

Support for Palestinian Statehood

Do you favor or oppose the establishment of an independent Palestinian state on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip? (% favor)



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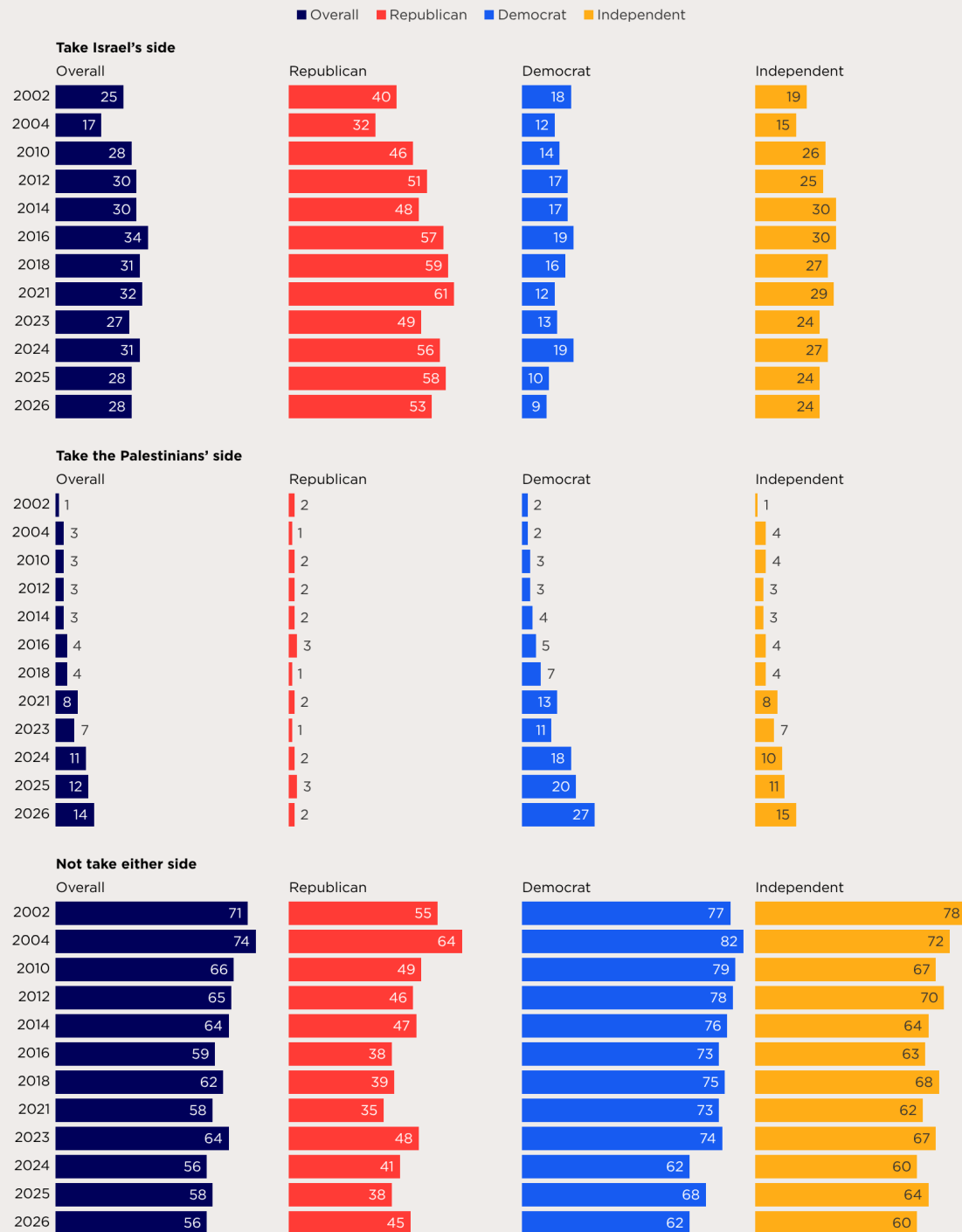
Conclusion

Israel's war against Hamas over the last three years and the United States government's support for it, as well as the joint US-Israeli war on Iran, have dramatically reshaped the American public's perception of one of Washington's strongest partners in the Middle East. The previously bipartisan public consensus on a strong relationship with Israel is now marked by deep divisions along partisan lines. Ongoing debates around continued US support for Israel could help to shape the outcome of the upcoming midterm elections for some voters and, over time, future US policy toward this longstanding US partner.

Appendix

Figure 1: US Side in Israel-Palestinian Conflict

In the Middle East conflict, do you think the United States should take Israel's side, take the Palestinians' side, or not take either side? (%)



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Methodology

This analysis is based on data from the 2026 Chicago Council Survey of the American public on foreign policy, a project of the Lester Crown Center on US Foreign Policy.

The 2026 Chicago Council Survey was conducted July 10-21, 2026, by Ipsos using its large-scale, nationwide, online research panel (KnowledgePanel) in English and Spanish among a weighted national sample of 2,156 adults 18 or older living in all 50 US states and the District of Columbia. The margin of sampling error for the full sample is ± 2.2 percentage points, including a design effect of 1.04.

The data were weighted to adjust for gender by age, race and ethnicity, education, census region by metropolitan status, household income, and language dominance. The demographic benchmarks came from the 2025 March supplement of the U.S. Census Bureau's Current Population Survey (CPS). Additionally, language dominance benchmark was obtained from the 2024 American Community Survey (ACS).

- Gender (Male, Female) by Age (18-29, 30-44, 45-59, and 60+)
- Race/Hispanic Ethnicity (White Non-Hispanic, Black Non-Hispanic, Other Non-Hispanic, Hispanic, 2+ Races Non-Hispanic)
- Education (Less than High School, High School, Some College, Bachelor's degree or higher)
- Census Region (Northeast, Midwest, South, West) by Metropolitan status (Metro, non-Metro)
- Household Income (Under \$25,000, \$25,000-\$49,999, \$50,000-\$74,999, \$75,000-\$99,999, \$100,000-\$149,999, \$150,000+)
- Language Dominance (English Dominant Hispanic, Bilingual Hispanic, Spanish Dominant Hispanic, Non-Hispanic)

Partisan identification is based on how respondents answered a standard partisan self-identification question: "Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as a Republican, a Democrat, an Independent, or what?"

To examine differences within the Republican and Democratic parties, we further divide Republicans and Democrats into subgroups.

Republicans are divided into MAGA Republicans (the 61% of Republicans who also say they are part of the Make America Great Again, or MAGA, movement) and non-MAGA Republicans (the 39% of Republicans who say they are not part of the MAGA movement).

Democrats are divided into ideological groups: 63 percent of Democrats identify as liberal to some degree (12% extremely liberal, 33% liberal, 17% slightly liberal), while another 37 percent of Democrats identify as moderate (30%) or conservative to some degree (6%).

The 2026 Chicago Council Survey is made possible by the generous support of the Crown family, the Dr. Scholl Foundation, and Observer Research Foundation America.

About the Chicago Council on Global Affairs

The Chicago Council on Global Affairs is an independent, nonpartisan membership organization that provides insight—and influences the public discourse—on critical global issues. We convene leading global voices, conduct independent research, and engage the public to explore ideas that will shape our global future. The Council is committed to bringing clarity and offering solutions to issues that transcend borders and transform how people, businesses, and governments engage the world. Learn more at globalaffairs.org.

About the Lester Crown Center on US Foreign Policy

Established in 2018 with a transformative gift from the Crown Family, the Lester Crown Center on US Foreign Policy is driven by the belief that the public plays a critical role in determining the direction of US foreign policy and that an informed and engaged public is critical for effective policymaking. The centerpiece of the Lester Crown Center is its annual survey of American public opinion and US foreign policy, the Chicago Council Survey, which has been conducted since 1974.