

# A Jewish State: Ethnicity and Support for Democracy in Israel

Hannah Ridge  
University of Chicago

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# Liminal Group Membership

- ▶ Complicating racial identities
  - ▶ Strength of identity
  - ▶ Internal & external recognition
  - ▶ Relative group traits
- ▶ Liminal/Marginal group members = Individuals who are not protogroup members
- ▶ Marginal members must affirm a group membership
  - ▶ Achieve recognition (Ellemers and Jetten 2013 )
  - ▶ Access the social and economic privileges (Hitlin, Brown, and Elder 2007)
  - ▶ Promote cognitive identity concordance (Saperstein and Penner 2014).

# Intra-group Difference & Politics

- ▶ Marginal group members may show heightened group loyalty, especially during crisis, to prove their identity (Ellemers and Jetten 2013)
- ▶ Marginal US whites show more extreme attitudes and boundary protection than “prototypical” whites (Yadon and Ostfeld 2020)
  - ▶ “work harder on behalf of the group”



# Intra-group Difference & Politics

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  - ▶ “work harder on behalf of the group”
- ▶ Latinos who over-estimate the lightness of their skin tone take more conservative racialized policy positions (Ostfeld and Yadon 2021)
  - ▶ Latinos who over-estimate the darkness of their skin tone take more liberal positions (Ostfeld and Yadon 2021)

# Ashkenormativity

- ▶ Ashkenazi Jews: Jews of European extraction
- ▶ Sephardic and Mizrahi Jews: Jews of Middle East/North African extraction
- ▶ Other (African, former USSR, Sabra, Mixed ethnicity)
  
- ▶ Mizrahi culture was considered “‘primitive’, ‘traditional’, ‘anti-intellectual’” and a threat to “the model of the new Jew which the country’s leaders were trying to imbue with the spirit of the West” (Shoshana 2016, 492).
- ▶ “most contemporary constructions of Jewishness are rooted in an assumption that Jews are white/Ashkenazi” (Gonzalez-Lesser 2020, 492 ).

# Test

- ▶ Conjoint experiment (Shamir and Shamir 1995)
- ▶ 1,035 adult Jewish Israeli sample (5.87 minutes)
- ▶ “How would you describe your ancestry?”
  - ▶ 43% identified as Ashkenazi, 22% as Mizrahi, 11.3% as Sephardi, 11.9% as Mixed, and 11.7% as Other.
- ▶ “Do you belong to a minority ethnic group in Israel?” (12.2%)
- ▶ “To what extent do you think Israel should allow people of a different ethnic group as most of Israel’s people to come and live here?”
  - ▶ 13.2% would allow many immigrants of different ethnicities, while 13.9% stated they would prefer to allow no such immigrants.

# Choices

Borders	Israel's territory in the future could be the Land of Israel, including the other territories	Israel's territory in the future could be within the Green Line (pre-1967) borders with minor territorial adjustments
Jewish Population	Israel's population could be made up of a clear, firm, long-term Jewish majority	Israel's population could be made up of a small Jewish majority that may become a minority in the future
Democracy	Israel could be a democratic state with equal political rights to all, including the Arabs living in the state	Israel could be a non-democratic state in that it denies political rights to Arabs living in the country, such as voting rights
Peace	Israel could be in a state of durable peace with the Arab states with only a small probability of war	Israel could be without peace and with a high probability of war

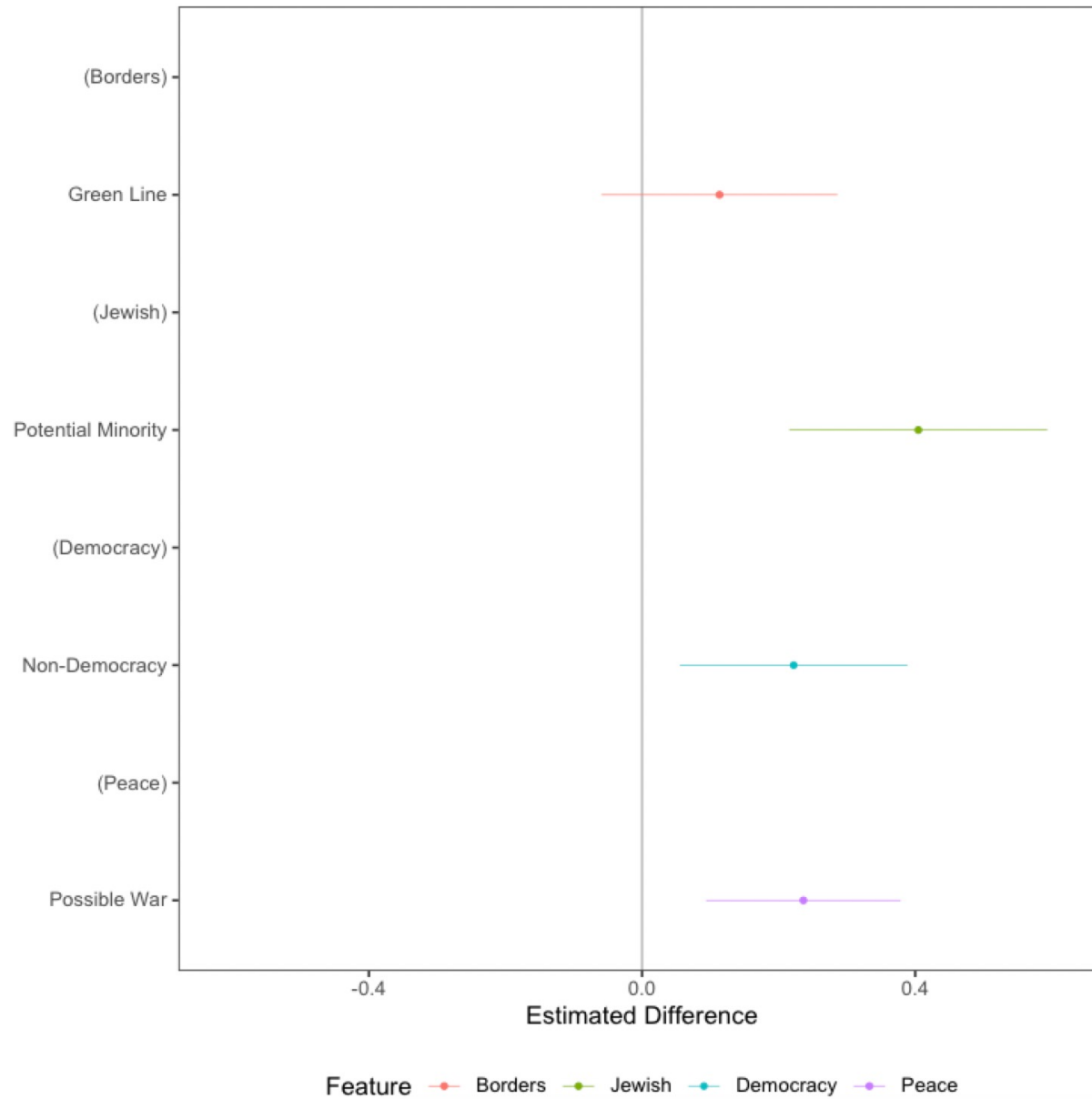


גבולות	השטח של ישראל בעתיד יכול להיות בגבולות הקו הירוק (לפני 1967) עם התאמות טריטוריאליות קלות.
האוכלוסייה היהודית	האוכלוסייה בישראל יכולה להיות מורכבת מרוב יהודי קטן שעלול להפוך למיעוט בעתיד.
דמוקרטיה	ישראל יכולה להיות מדינה לא-דמוקרטית בכך שהיא מכחישה את הזכויות הפוליטיות של הערבים החיים בה.
שלום	ישראל יכולה להיות בשלום בר-קיימא עם מדינות ערב עם סיכוי קטן בלבד למלחמה.

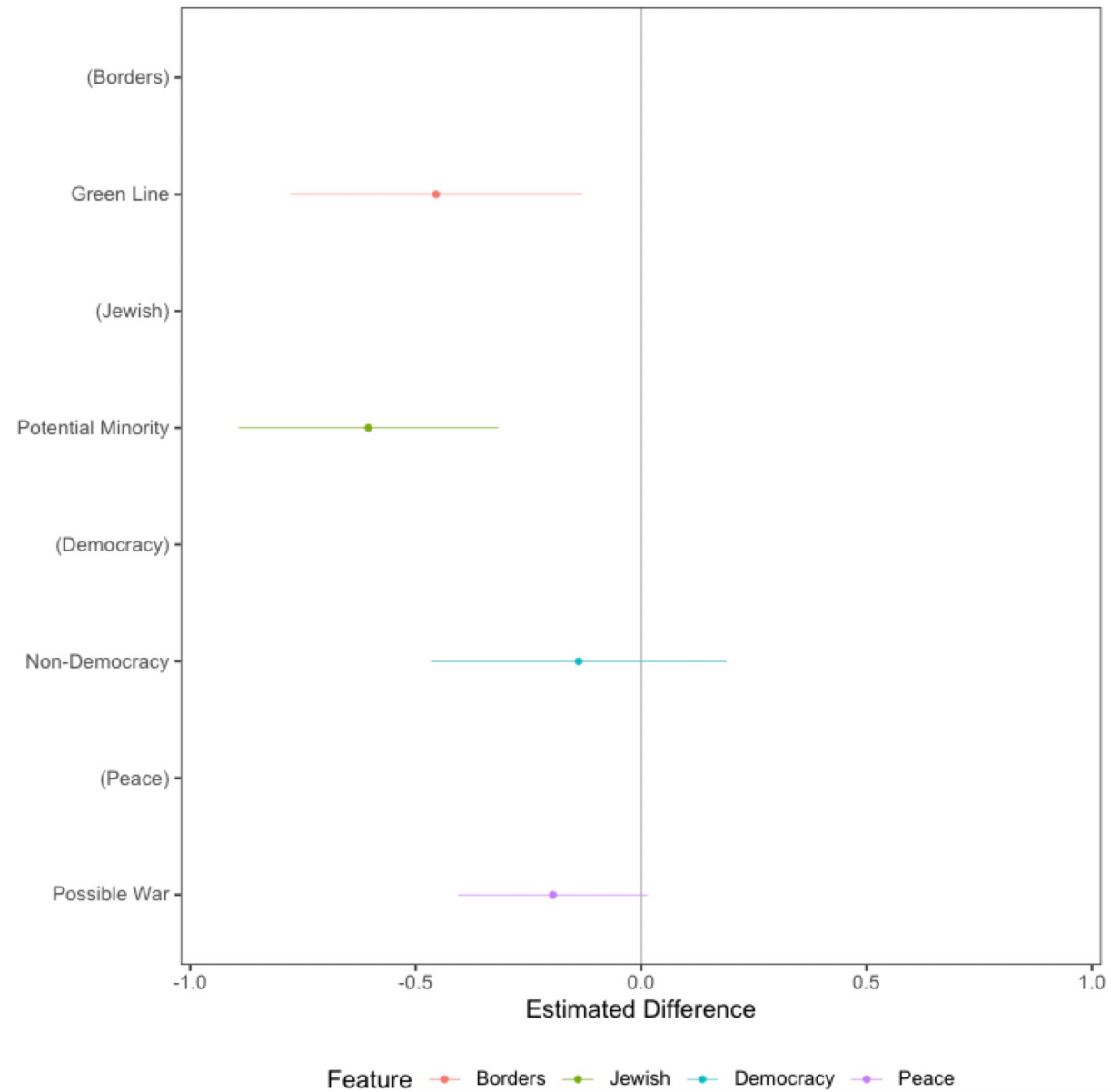
תמיכה חזקה	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	התנגדות חזקה
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# Predictions

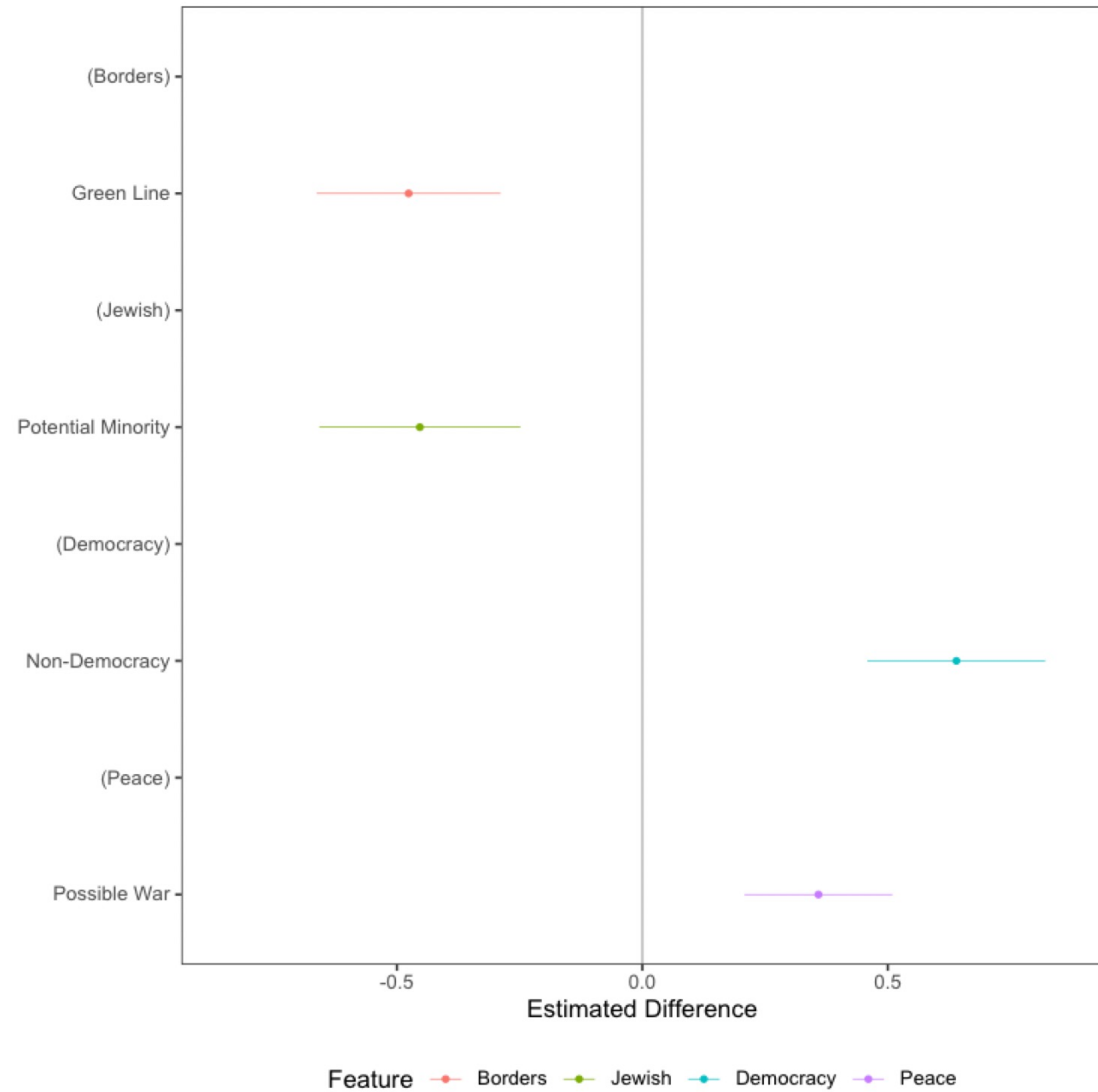
- ▶ H1: Sephardi and Mizrahi Jews will place more value on the Jewish character of the state than Ashkenazi Jews will.
- ▶ H2: Sephardi and Mizrahi Jews will place less value on a democracy that gives equal rights to Arabs than Ashkenazi Jews will.
- ▶ H3: Jews who identify as part of a minority ethnic group will place more value on the Jewish character of the state than those who identify as part of the ethnic majority will.
- ▶ H4: Jews who identify as part of a minority ethnic group will place less value on a democracy that gives equal rights to Arabs than those who identify as part of the ethnic majority will.
- ▶ H5: Jews who favor diversifying immigration will place less value on the Jewish majority of the state.
- ▶ H6: Jews who favor diversifying immigration will place more value on a democracy that gives equal rights to Arabs than Jews who oppose diversifying immigration.



Difference in AMCE for Ashkenazi and non-Ashkenazi respondents



AMCE Differences for Identifying as a Minority Ethnic Group and Not



AMCE Differences for Favoring Diversifying Immigration and Not

# Results

- ▶ H1: Sephardi and Mizrahi Jews will place more value on the Jewish character of the state than Ashkenazi Jews will.
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# Revisiting the results

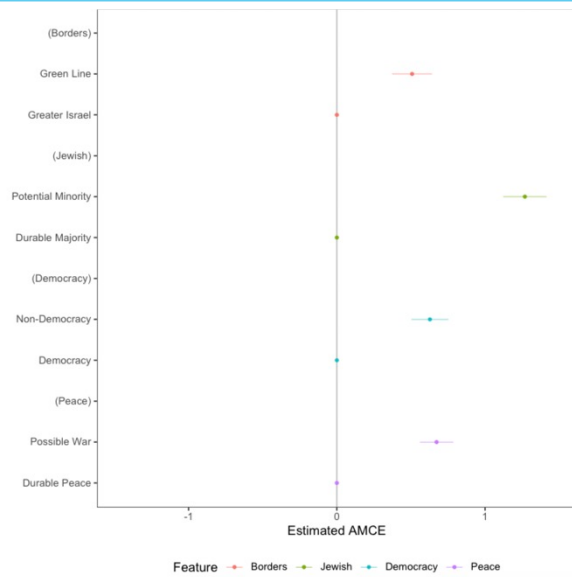
- ▶ Modify survey questions
  - ▶ Some of the Mizrahi identified as Arab rather than Mizrahi
  - ▶ Diversifying immigration could be construed as diversity within the Jewish community
    - ▶ Change to Jewish/Non-Jewish
    - ▶ Change to white/non-white
- ▶ Introduce question to religious communities (secular to orthodox)
- ▶ Consider the ethnic diversity in addressing other aspects of Israeli politics

# Thank you

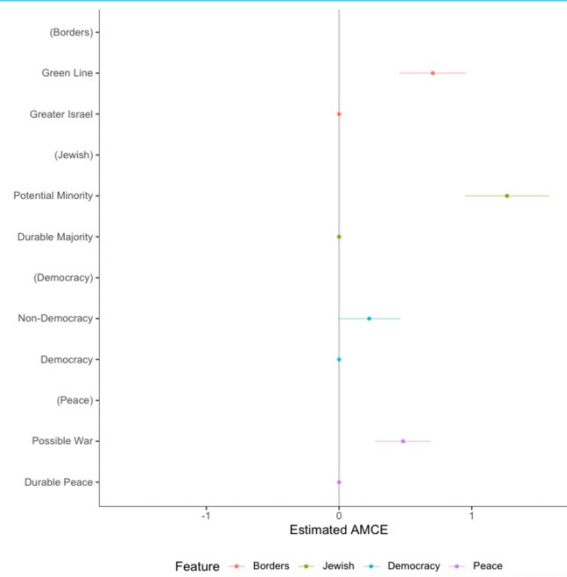
- ▶ [hridge@uchicago.edu](mailto:hridge@uchicago.edu)
- ▶ @hmridge



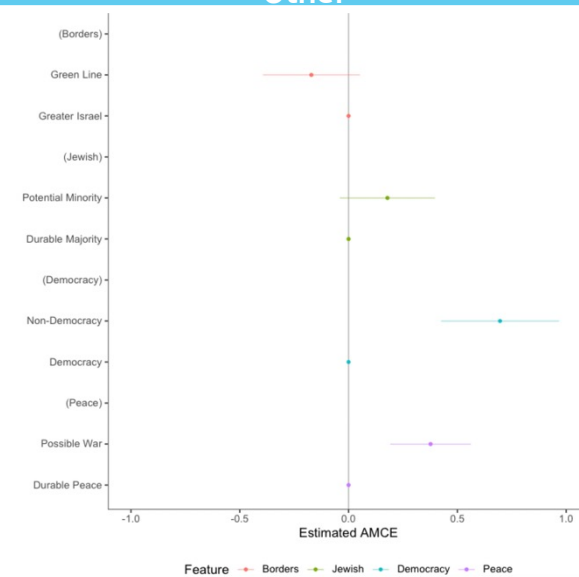
## Ashenazi



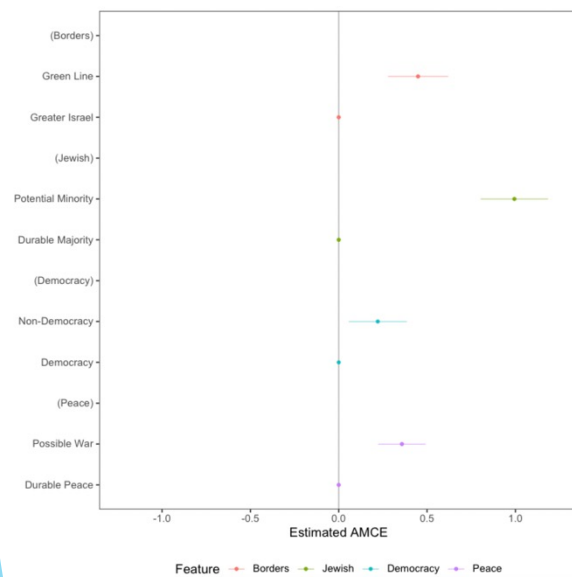
## Mizrahi



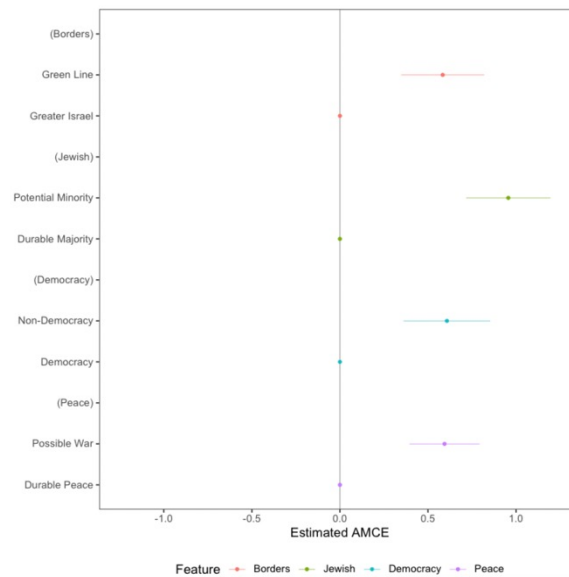
## Other



## Sephardi



## Mixed



Borders	The future State of Israel will include the territories within and beyond the Green Line	The future State of Israel will include the territories within the Green Line, with slight territorial changes
Jewish Population	Israel's population could be made up of a clear, stable, long-term Jewish majority	Israel's population could be made up of a small Jewish majority that may become a minority in the future
Democracy	Israel could be a democratic state with equal political rights to all residents, regardless of religion, race, or sex	Israel could be a non-democratic state, denying political rights, such as voting, to non-Jewish residents residing in the state
Peace	Israel will conduct a lasting peace with Arab countries, and the chances of war with these countries will be low	Israel will not reach peace agreements with Arab countries and the chances of war with other countries will be high