

Israel: 2013 Government Composition and Coalition Agreements

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Israel: 2013 Government Composition and Coalition Agreements

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SUMMARY Israel's newly formed, thirty-third government is headed by Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu of the Likud party and includes, in addition to the Likud Yisrael Beiteinu merged parliamentary faction, three additional partners—Hatnua, Yesh Atid, and Habayit Hayehudi. Netanyahu signed individual coalition agreements with each coalition partner. All of these coalition agreements include guidelines for the adoption of government policies, as well as general commitments to make enforcement of military conscription duties more equitable and to institute electoral reforms. The agreements also guarantee the inclusion of representatives from all coalition partners in a ministerial committee for peace negotiations with the Palestinians that will be established in accordance with the agreement with Hatnua. The coalition agreements with both Yesh Atid and Habayit Hayehudi contain detailed plans for reforming both the military and the civilian national service in Israel, and the country's electoral system.

I. Introduction

Israel's thirty-third government was sworn in on March 18, 2013. Smaller in size compared with previous governments, the new government has, in addition to Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu, twenty-one ministers and eight deputy ministers.¹

In accordance with Israel's parliamentary system of government, Netanyahu, the head of the victorious Likud Yisrael Beiteinu² candidates list,³ was offered the opportunity to form a government. As in the past, however, the votes cast for the winning list were insufficient to secure majority support for a government under his leadership.⁴ With the support of only thirty-one of the Knesset's (Parliament's) 120 members, Netanyahu was obliged to enter into coalition agreements⁵ with other factions or parliamentary groups⁶ that had passed the qualifying

¹ Moran Azulay, *Netanyahu's New Government Sworn In, Holds First Meeting* YNETNEWS.COM, <http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-4357924,00.html> (last updated Mar. 18, 2013).

² The Likud Yisrael Beiteinu represents a merger of two political parties—Likud, led by Mr. Netanyahu, and Yisrael Beiteinu, led by Avigdor Lieberman.

³ “The bodies which participate in the Knesset elections are called ‘lists’. A list must consist of at least one registered party, but it could also contain several parties.” See *Parliamentary Groups*, THE KNESSET, http://knesset.gov.il/faction/eng/FactionEtc_eng.asp (last visited Apr. 22, 2013).

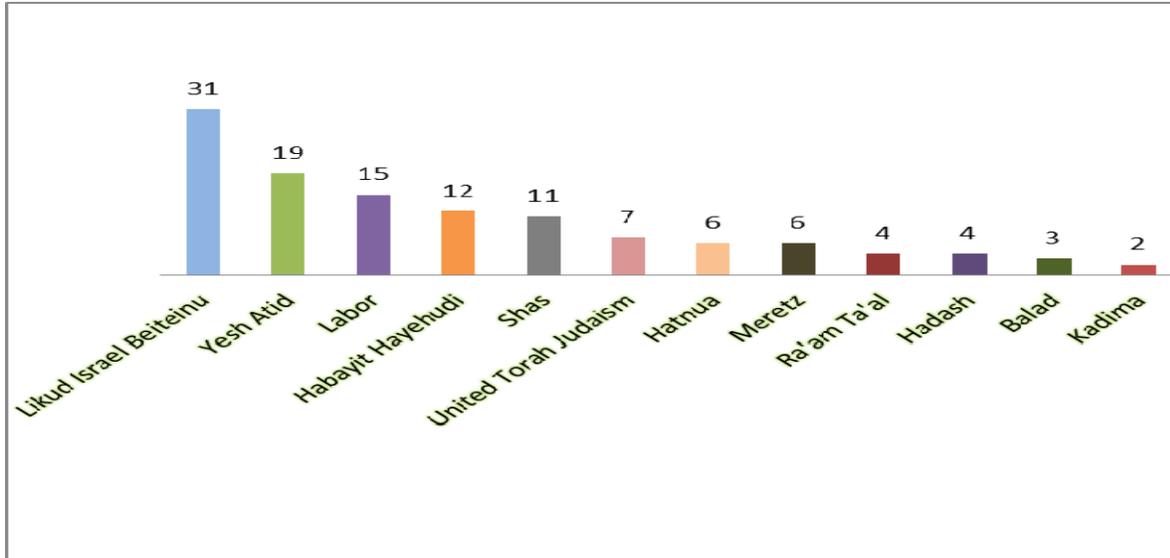
⁴ See Barak Ravid & Jonathan Lis, *Lieberman Unveils His List for Likud Beiteinu Ticket*, HAARETZ (Dec. 04, 2012), <http://www.haaretz.com/news/national/lieberman-unveils-his-list-for-likud-beiteinu-ticket-premium-1.482463>; see also *Likud Beytenu*, THE ISRAEL DEMOCRACY INSTITUTE (IDI), <http://en.idi.org.il/tools-and-data/israeli-elections-and-parties/political-parties/likud-beytenu/> (last visited Apr. 22, 2013).

⁵ For information on the process of convening a coalition government in Israel, see Ruth Levush, *Israel's 2013 Elections: The Making of a Coalition Government*, IN CUSTODIA LEGIS (Law Library of Congress, Jan. 22, 2013),

threshold to gain seats in the Knesset.⁷ Initially signing an agreement with Hatnua, led by Tsipi Livni,⁸ on February 19, 2013, Netanyahu proceeded to sign two additional coalition agreements on March 15, 2013, with Yesh Atid, led by Yair Lapid,⁹ and with Habayit Hayehudi, led by Naftali Bennet.¹⁰

II. 2013 Elections Results

The following chart represents the distribution of seats in the 120-member Knesset based on the final results of the January 2013 elections:



Source: *19th Knesset to See Right, Left Virtually Tied*, YNETNEWS.COM (Jan. 23, 2013), <http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-4335946,00.html>. Further information is available at *2013: The Elections for the 19th Knesset*, IDI (Jan. 22, 2013), <http://en.idi.org.il/tools-and-data/israeli-elections-and-parties/elections/2013/>.

<http://blogs.loc.gov/law/2013/01/israels-2013-elections/>; for information on Israel's elections system, see Ruth Levush, *Israel's Upcoming National Elections: Background Information*, IN CUSTODIA LEGIS (Law Library of Congress, Nov. 5, 2012), <http://blogs.loc.gov/law/2012/11/israels-upcoming-national-elections-background-information/>.

⁶ According to the Knesset website, “[o]nce a list is elected to the Knesset, it becomes a Parliamentary Group (also called a “faction”), even if the distinct parties in it continue to function individually on the outside.” See THE KNESSET, *supra* note 3.

⁷ The current qualifying threshold is 2% of the votes. See *The Electoral System in Israel*, THE KNESSET, http://www.knesset.gov.il/description/eng/eng_mimshal_beh.htm (last visited Apr. 22, 2013).

⁸ For information on Hatnua party, see *Hatnua*, IDI, <http://en.idi.org.il/tools-and-data/israeli-elections-and-parties/political-parties/hatnua/> (last visited Apr. 22, 2013).

⁹ For the Yesh Atid [There is a Future] party platform, see *Our Agenda*, YESH ATID, <http://en.yeshatid.org.il/Our-Agenda> (last visited Apr. 22, 2013); for additional information see *Yesh Atid*, IDI, <http://en.idi.org.il/tools-and-data/israeli-elections-and-parties/political-parties/yesh-atid/> (last visited Apr. 22, 2013).

¹⁰ For information on Habayit Hayehudi party, see *Habayit Hayehudi*, IDI, <http://en.idi.org.il/tools-and-data/israeli-elections-and-parties/political-parties/habayit-hayehudi/> (last visited Apr. 22, 2013); for the party's platform, see THE BAYIT YEHUDI, BECAUSE ISRAEL IS OUR JEWISH HOME, <http://baityehudi.org.il/englp/our.htm> (last visited Apr. 22, 2013).

III. The Composition of the 2013 Government

The following list provides the names, by party affiliation, of the twenty-two ministers (including the Prime Minister) and ten deputy ministers in Israel's thirty-third government:¹¹

A. Likud Yisrael Beiteinu

Ministers:

1. Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Minister of Public Diplomacy and Diaspora Affairs: Benjamin Netanyahu
2. Minister of Defense: Moshe Ya'alon
3. Minister of Internal Security: Yitzhak Aharonovitch
4. Minister of Intelligence, Minister of Strategic Affairs, Minister of International Relations: Yuval Steinitz
5. Minister of Internal Affairs: Gideon Sa'ar
6. Minister of Home Front Defense: Gilad Erdan
7. Minister of Transportation, National Infrastructure, and Road Safety: Yisrael Katz
8. Minister of Tourism: Uzi Landau
9. Minister of Immigrant Absorption: Sofa Landver
10. Minister of Culture and Sport: Limor Livnat
11. Minister of Energy and Water, of the Development of the Negev and Galil (Galilee) and of Regional Cooperation: Silvan Shalom
12. Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: Yair Shamir

Deputy Ministers:

1. Deputy Minister in the Prime Minister's Office: Ofir Akunis
2. Deputy Minister of Defense: Danny Danon
3. Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs: Zeev Elkin
4. Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs: Fania Kirshenbaum
5. Deputy Minister of Transportation: Tzipi Hotovely

B. Yesh Atid

1. Minister of Finance: Yair Lapid
2. Minister of Welfare and Social Services: Meir Cohen
3. Minister of Health: Yael German
4. Minister of Science and Technology: Yaakov Perry
5. Minister of Education: Shai Piron

Deputy Minister:

¹¹ For links to biographical and political information on all ministers and deputy ministers in the thirty-third Israeli government, see *Nineteenth Knesset: Government 33*, THE KNESSET (Mar. 18, 2013), http://knesset.gov.il/mk/eng/MKIndex_Current_eng.asp?view=4.

1. Deputy Minister of Finance: Mickey Levy

C. Habayit Hayehudi

Ministers

1. Minister of Religious Services; Minister of Industry, Trade, and Labor: Naftali Bennett
2. Minister of Housing and Construction: Uri Yehuda Ariel
3. Minister for Senior Citizens: Uri Orbach

Deputy Ministers

1. Deputy Minister of Religions: Eli Ben-Dahan
2. Deputy Minister of Education: Avi Wortzman

D. Hatnua

1. Minister of Justice: Tzipi Livni
2. Minister of Environmental Protection: Amir Peretz

IV. The 2013 Coalition Agreements

The first coalition agreement Netanyahu entered into was with Hatnua, a faction that had won six of the 120 seats in the Knesset. This agreement is relatively brief and provides a general framework for cooperation within the coalition government and the Knesset. It designates Tzipi Livni as Minister of Justice and requires the selection of an additional minister, the Minister of Environmental Protection, from the Hatnua faction.¹²

The agreement with Hatnua further calls for the establishment of a ministerial team for the peace process with the Palestinians that will be headed by the Prime Minister and include Livni and the Ministers of Defense and of Foreign Affairs. Livni, according to the agreement, would be appointed by the Prime Minister as a negotiator with the Palestinians “in order to reach a political accord with them that will end the conflict.”¹³ The agreement provides that “if an accord is reached, it will be submitted for confirmation by the government and the Knesset, and if necessary under any law, by a public referendum.”¹⁴

Almost a month later, on March 15, Netanyahu managed to complete the formation of his government by entering into coalition agreements with Yesh Atid, the runner-up in the election

¹² Coalition Agreement in the 19th Knesset Between the Likud Yisrael Beiteinu Faction and Hatnua for Assembling the 33rd Government of the State of Israel (Feb. 19, 2013), <http://www.knesset.gov.il/docs/heb/coalition2013.pdf> (in Hebrew).

¹³ *Id.* § 14.

¹⁴ *Id.*

with nineteen Knesset seats, and with Habayit Hayehudi, which obtained eleven.¹⁵ Netanyahu's coalition currently comprises sixty-seven of the 120 Knesset members.

The coalition agreements signed by all the partners expressly recognize “the importance of the preservation of the State of Israel as a Jewish and democratic state, and the importance of protecting [its] defensible borders.”¹⁶

Likud Yisrael Beiteinu's agreements with the two larger factions, Yesh Atid and Habayit Hayehudi,¹⁷ contain specific rules governing the composition of the coalition government, its management board and chairmanship, its members' obligation to vote according to the coalition agenda, and the introduction of bills before the Knesset.¹⁸ These agreements also include identical supplements—Basic Guidelines of Government Policy¹⁹ and The Common Path—²⁰ relating to citizens' contributions to national service. In addition, both agreements contain almost identical provisions in regard to reforming Israel's governmental system.²¹

All the coalition agreements contain commitments to remedy the housing shortage and rising costs of housing in Israel, with the Yesh Atid and Habayit Hayehudi agreements including special detailed supplements on this issue.²² The agreement with Yesh Atid also contains a special supplement on introducing a special program to support small businesses, and the text of a proposed bill, the Rehabilitation, Advancement, and Incorporation of Persons with Autism into the Community Law, 5773-2013, which the parties agreed to support and submit for the Knesset's approval.²³

Information provided in subsections A–C below describes the major topics that were expressly incorporated into Likud Yisrael Beiteinu's agreements with two other larger factions in the Knesset, Yesh Atid and Habayit Hayehudi.

¹⁵ Coalition Agreement in the 19th Knesset Between the Likud Yisrael Beiteinu Faction and Yesh Atid, Led by Yair Lapid, for Assembling the 33rd Government of the State of Israel (Yesh Atid Agreement) (Mar. 15, 2013), http://www.knesset.gov.il/docs/heb/coalition2013_2.pdf (in Hebrew); Coalition Agreement in the 19th Knesset Between the Likud Yisrael Beiteinu Faction and Habayit Hayehudi for Assembling the 33rd Government of the State of Israel (Habayit Hayehudi Agreement) (Mar. 15, 2013), http://www.knesset.gov.il/docs/heb/coalition2013_1.pdf (in Hebrew).

¹⁶ See § 3 of all coalition agreements cited above (translated by author, R.L.).

¹⁷ Yesh Atid Agreement & Habayit Hayehudi Agreement, *supra* note 15.

¹⁸ *Id.*, supp. B.

¹⁹ *Id.*, supp. A.

²⁰ *Id.*, supp. C.

²¹ Yesh Atid Agreement, *supra* note 15, §§ 35–38; Habayit Hayehudi Agreement, *supra* note 15, supp. D.

²² Yesh Atid Agreement, *supra* note 15, supp. D; Habayit Hayehudi Agreement, *supra* note 15, supp. E.

²³ Yesh Atid Agreement, *supra* note 15, supp. F. As the father of a severely autistic daughter, Yair Lapid, Chairman of Yesh Atid, is undoubtedly familiar with the pleas of families with autistic members. See Jenni Frazer, *Interview: Yair Lapid*, THE JEWISH CHRONICLE ONLINE (Jan. 12, 2012), <http://www.thejc.com/lifestyle/life-style-features/61798/interview-yair-lapid>.

A. Basic Guidelines of Government Policy

The following is a translation of the identical provisions of the coalition agreements between Yisrael Beiteinu and its two major coalition partners, Yesh Atid and Habayit Hayehudi, regarding the principles that should apply to governmental policy:

- The Jewish nation has an irrefutable right to a sovereign state in the Land of Israel, its national and historical homeland.
- Israel will strive for a peace agreement with the Palestinians in order to reach a political agreement with them that will end the conflict. If such an agreement is reached, it will be submitted for the approval by the government and the Knesset, and if necessary under law, by a public referendum.
- The government will actively work to strengthen national security and provide personal safety to its citizens while [conducting] a decisive and determined fight against violence and terrorism.
- The government will advance the political process and act to promote peace with all our neighbors while guarding the security, historical, and national interests of Israel.
- The government will preserve the Jewish character of the state and of Israel's heritage, and will respect the religions and traditions of all members of other religions in the State of Israel, in accordance with the values [expressed] in the Declaration of Independence.
- The government will act to reduce the cost of living [by utilizing] all means at its disposal, including encouraging free market competition and reducing industrial and sectoral centralization.
- The government will act to provide every boy and girl in Israel with a broad education that will prepare them to meet the challenges of the evolving world and [prepare them for earning] a respectable livelihood.
- The government will place learning and higher education at the top of its agenda.
- The government will act to promote equality in shouldering the burden [of service to the country], so that all population groups in Israel share the responsibility of [national] service, either through military or civilian service.
- The government will act to fortify the rule of law and preserve the status of the Supreme Court.
- The government will act [using] all means at its disposal to reduce housing prices.
- The government will act to create the economic conditions that will enable sustainable growth, a reduction in the cost of living, and the creation and preservation of jobs in the market.
- The government will strive for social justice by reducing social gaps and [engaging in] an uncompromising struggle against poverty through education, employment, and housing solutions, among other things.
- The government will designate the development of [the living conditions of those] on the geographical and social periphery in Israel as a national objective. The government will act to prioritize the provision of various services, all with the

objective of creating equal opportunity for its citizens without regard for their place of residence or socioeconomic status.

- The government will act to change the electoral system in order to strengthen governance and stability.
- The government will act to reduce social gaps and fight poverty, among other things, through education, employment, and finding housing solutions.
- The government will place immigration and absorption [of immigrants] at the top of its agenda and act decisively to increase immigration from all countries of the world.
- The government will act to defend the environment in Israel and improve the quality of life of residents of the State.
- The government will act to improve services [to members of] religious [communities] in accordance with [the needs of] different segments of the population.
- The government will act to increase the familiarity of its citizens with the sources of Jewish knowledge and tradition.²⁴

B. The Common Path

1. Background

A special Supplement C entitled The Common Path is attached to both coalition agreements with Yesh Atid and Habayit Hayehudi. This supplement provides principles for the reform of the existing military conscription system so that the draft is applied more equally to all Israeli citizens.

“Creating a more equitable system for the conscription of young Israelis [in the army] to serve their country”²⁵ was among Yesh Atid’s top issues in its 2013 campaign agenda. The de facto exemption of Haredi (Ultraorthodox) Jewish citizens from military service resulting from continual deferments for yeshiva²⁶ studies was the subject of public discontent in Israel and has resulted in multiple petitions to Israel’s Supreme Court. In the latest decision on this issue,²⁷ rendered in February 2012, the Supreme Court prohibited any further extension of the Tal law,²⁸ which had previously authorized a swift deferment of military service for Haredi Jews on the basis of their studying in a yeshiva.

²⁴ Yesh Atid & Habayit Hayehudi Agreements, *supra* note 15, supp. A (translated by author, R.L.).

²⁵ YESH ATID, *supra* note 9.

²⁶ A yeshiva is a seminary for Orthodox Jewish men where they study the primary source of Jewish law, the Talmud.

²⁷ H CJ 6298/07 Resler v. Knesset [Feb. 21, 2012], <http://elyon1.court.gov.il/files/07/980/062/n18/07062980.n18.pdf>.

²⁸ For an analysis of the legislative and policy issues concerning the exemption of yeshiva students from the draft, see Ruth Levush, *Israel: Supreme Court Decision Invalidating the Law on Haredi Military Draft Postponement*, LAW LIBRARY OF CONGRESS (Mar. 2012), <http://www.loc.gov/law/help/haredi-military-draft.php>.

As the runner-up in the 2013 elections with nineteen of the 120 seats in the Knesset and in coordination with Habayit Hayehudi, Yesh Atid was able to include specific requirements for instituting equitable conscription in Likud Yisrael Beiteinu's coalition agreements with both Yesh Atid and Habayit Hayehudi. The principles governing this matter are contained in Supplement C.

2. *Introduction to The Common Path*

The introduction to The Common Path supplement states that

[i]n the days of the revival of the State of Israel from the ruins of exile and the smoke of the [Holocaust] death chambers Jewish sovereignty has been reborn in the Land of Israel. But not only [sovereignty] was revived—the world of Torah also began to be rehabilitated from the ruins.²⁹

While recognizing that the rebirth of Jewish sovereignty and “the blossom of [Torah] scholarship”³⁰ constitute a “double achievement of the new Israeli history,” the agreements note that there has been a disconnect between the two. An interaction between these “two worlds”³¹ is necessary, according to the agreements, in order to implement the vision laid down in the Declaration of the Establishment of the State of Israel that the state be “based on freedom, justice, and peace as envisaged by the prophets of Israel.”³² According to the agreements, the interaction between Torah scholarship and the sovereignty of the state is necessary for the formation of “a just society, one in which resources, rights and obligations are divided in a fair and equal way,”³³ a society where citizens harbor mutual respect and share a joint expectation for a better world.³⁴

3. *Principles for Cooperation and Shared Contributions*

a. General Principles

The parties recognize that every Israeli citizen eighteen years of age or older has a duty to serve in either military or civilian service.³⁵ The Israel Defense Forces (IDF), however, have been given priority in selecting personnel from those who are drafted.³⁶

²⁹ Yesh Atid & Habayit Hayehudi Agreements, *supra* note 15, Introductory notes to supp. C (translated by author, R.L.).

³⁰ *Id.*

³¹ *Id.*

³² *Id.* (citing the Declaration of the Establishment of the State of Israel, 1 LAWS OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL [LSI] 3 (5708-1948)).

³³ *Id.*

³⁴ *Id.*

³⁵ *Id.*, *Principles for a Path to Partnership in [Engaging in] a Task and Shouldering the Burden*, § 1 & supp. C.

³⁶ *Id.* § 5.

The agreements call for granting comprehensive professional training to members of the Haredi community with the objective of incorporating them into the workforce.³⁷ In addition, the agreements encourage the use of “economic rather than criminal means” for enforcement of service obligations.³⁸

The agreements also introduce a gradual reduction in the duration of military service to a period not exceeding two years. The IDF, however, will be authorized to define units and roles in which the service will be longer. Soldiers who serve longer than the required minimum period of service will be entitled to both financial compensation and educational grants for use at academic institutions. The agreements further call for the adoption of new rules for reservists regarding conscription criteria, age requirements, duration of annual service, and appropriate monetary compensation.³⁹

According to the agreements a ministerial committee headed by a minister from Yesh Atid will be established for the preparation of a bill that will reflect The Common Path principles. The committee will include two representatives from Likud Yisrael Beiteinu and one from each of the other coalition factions. The bill prepared by the committee will be presented to the Knesset within forty-five days after the government has been convened. To expedite the bill’s passage in the Knesset a special Knesset committee, or a subcommittee of the Knesset’s Foreign Affairs and Security Committee, headed by a representative of Habayit Hayehudi, will be established.⁴⁰

b. Long-Term Planning

The Common Path supplement to the agreements contains special provisions on long-term planning for national service. Accordingly, the size of the IDF will be determined by a multiannual plan that will accommodate Israel’s security needs. The IDF must preserve diversity in its ranks, assigning soldiers from all segments of Israel’s society to all types of jobs and services.⁴¹

The number of Haredi men aged eighteen to twenty-one who will be drafted annually will increase every year in accordance with IDF objectives. The agreements foresee that a minimum of 1,600 Haredi men will serve in combat units.⁴² The agreements recognize, however, that a limited number of “dedicated” yeshiva students will be fully exempted from service.⁴³ Yeshiva students who have not been called up for military service or are exempted from it will serve in civilian service positions.⁴⁴

³⁷ *Id.* §§ 6–7.

³⁸ *Id.* § 8.

³⁹ *Id.* § 9.

⁴⁰ *Id.* § 11–12.

⁴¹ *Id.*, *The Service Process in a Long-Term Path*, § a.

⁴² *Id.* § c.

⁴³ *Id.* § e.

⁴⁴ *Id.* § f.

Those serving in units and roles that were not defined by the IDF as requiring service longer than the minimum determined period will be entitled to “family compensation” at a rate of half of those serving longer terms of service.⁴⁵ The agreement further calls for improving draft enforcement, including by the imposition of economic sanctions on draft dodgers.⁴⁶

c. Interim Period

During the interim period of August 1, 2013–August 1, 2017, yeshiva students who have turned twenty-two could receive full exemption from service.⁴⁷ The Ministry of Industry, Trade and Labor will immediately start preparing exempted Haredi young men to integrate into the labor force, putting an emphasis on occupations that are in demand.⁴⁸

The agreements provide a list of targeted quotas for Haredi conscripts to be drafted for both military and civil national service positions for the years 2013–2016 and determine that a law reflecting The Common Path will be fully implemented by 2017.⁴⁹

To encourage compliance, financial sanctions will be imposed not only on individual draft dodgers but also on yeshivas that enroll more draft dodgers than allowed by a yet-to-be-determined quota.⁵⁰

d. National Service for Israeli Arabs

The agreement calls for an increase in the number of Israeli Arabs who are allowed to volunteer to serve in civilian service.⁵¹ Such service

will be implemented with the objective of strengthening the integration of the Arab population as citizens who are involved . . . and active in Israeli society. This process will be conducted while understanding the barriers and complexities with which the [Israeli] Arab society deals with. All this [is aimed at] promoting a significant social change that will strengthen public services [and Arab] coexistence with and mutual partnership in the State of Israel.⁵²

National service for Israeli Arabs will initially be on a voluntary basis, with those serving receiving preference in obtaining civilian service positions; admission to language classes;

⁴⁵ *Id.* § g.

⁴⁶ *Id.* § k.

⁴⁷ *Id.* § l.

⁴⁸ *Id.* § m.

⁴⁹ *Id.*, *Decisions Accompanying the Law That Are Necessary for Completion of the Path*, § a.

⁵⁰ *Id.*, *The Service Process in a Long-Term Path*, § p.

⁵¹ *Id.* § 10.

⁵² *Id.*, *Decisions Accompanying the Law That Are Necessary for Completion of the Path*, § d.

professional training offered by the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Labor; and state-owned land.⁵³

Arab citizens who volunteer for civil service will serve for a period of at least one year and will be offered an opportunity to extend their service to two years. The type of contributions performed by Israeli Arabs during the course of civil service will be completely disconnected from the military system, and will be determined based on a comprehensive review of state needs as expressed in government ministerial plans. Volunteers will be entitled to monetary remuneration, including grants for university-level studies.⁵⁴

e. Exemption for Women Based on Religious Lifestyle

The exemption from service on religious grounds that has applied to women will continue to apply. The enforcement of sanctions against women who provided fraudulent declarations as a basis for their exemption or who violated the conditions of their exemption will be strengthened by regulations that will be issued within ninety days following the signing of the agreements.⁵⁵

C. Electoral Reform

Likud Yisrael Beiteinu's agreements with both Yesh Atid and Habayit Hayehudi contain special provisions regarding "[t]he electoral system, governance, democracy and the rule of law."⁵⁶

Accordingly, a bill for reforming the electoral system effective with the convening of the next (twentieth) Knesset should be submitted for Knesset approval during the current (ninth) Knesset's first session and supported by all factions of the coalition government. The changes proposed by the bill appear to promote a reduction in governmental expenditures, minimize fragmentation in the Knesset, and strengthen governmental stability. Among the main changes introduced by the agreements are the following:

- Reducing the maximum number of ministers, besides the Prime Minister, to eighteen; reducing the number of deputy ministers to four; and completely eliminating ministerial positions without portfolios.
- Requiring the support of seventy of the 120 Knesset members as a precondition for passing any further amendment of the electoral reform bill after its passage.
- Raising the threshold required for political lists to be admitted to the Knesset from 2% to 4% of the total vote count.

⁵³ *Id.*

⁵⁴ *Id.*

⁵⁵ *Id.* § A.

⁵⁶ Yesh Atid Agreement, *supra* note 15, §§ 35–38; Habayit Hayehudi Agreement, *supra* note 15, supp. D.

- Introducing an amendment to Basic Law: The State Economy⁵⁷ that will require the support of sixty-one of the 120 Knesset members to approve any legislation whose implementation is expected to cost more than 50 million New Israel Shekels (approximately US\$14 million).⁵⁸

⁵⁷ Basic Law: The State Economy, 29 LSI 273 (5735-1974/75).

⁵⁸ Yesh Atid Agreement, *supra* note 15, §§ 35–38; Habayit Hayehudi Agreement, *supra* note 15, supp. D.