



האקדמיה הצעירה הישראלית
الأكاديمية الشابّة الإسرائيليّة
THE ISRAEL YOUNG ACADEMY

AFIK  **Israeli Forum
of Women
Professors**
in Academia

Coping Among Academic Faculty Following the Events of October 7 and the "Swords of Iron" War

Follow-up Survey

Data collection: May 2025

Publication: April 2026

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Executive Summary

This report presents the findings of a follow-up survey conducted in May 2025 (in the weeks preceding the first war with Iran) by The Israel Young Academy and Afik in Academia – Israeli Women Professors Forum. The survey examined the effects of the "Swords of Iron" War on academic faculty in Israel (with an emphasis on senior academic faculty) and compared them with the findings of a previous survey, conducted at the very start of the war (December 2023 [published in 2024]). A total of 739 faculty members participated in the current survey, and the respondent population was largely similar to that of the previous one. Key findings:

1. Negative impact on overall quality of life and daily functioning

- Severe impacts on emotional well-being and daily life persist among faculty members.
- A statistically significant increase in economic impact was recorded, particularly among early-career and non-tenured faculty.
- Approximately 12.3% of respondents experienced severe negative impact due to reserve duty, manifesting primarily in their daily lives.

2. Negative impact on academic activity

- The most severe areas of impact: colleagues from abroad avoiding visits to Israel, difficulty recruiting international students, decline in time invested in research, and diminished research quality.
- A statistically significant increase was observed in four areas: objectivity in peer review, recruitment of international students, receiving recommendations from international faculty for promotion purposes, and chances of selection for academic leadership roles.
- An approximately 25% drop in the number of academic publications was reported compared with the period prior to October 2023.



3. Looking ahead – future concerns

- A high correlation was found between concerns reported in the 2023 survey and actual impacts reported in 2025.
- The primary concerns in 2025 relate to continued damage to international connections: visits by colleagues from abroad, recruitment of international students, submission of research proposals to international funding bodies, receiving recommendations from international faculty for promotion purposes, and objectivity in academic peer review of respondents' work.

4. Likelihood of leaving Israeli academia

- The reported likelihood of leaving Israel increased by approximately 11% compared with 2023, and a sharp increase was recorded in the share reporting high likelihood of departure.
- The increase is particularly pronounced among lower-ranked and non-tenured faculty.
- A notable increase was recorded in concrete steps taken toward emigration (such as obtaining a foreign passport).

5. Solutions and policy measures

No substantive change was observed in the solutions preferred by respondents compared with the previous survey. Preferred solutions include: strengthening research funding, supporting international collaborations, assisting in recruiting and training young scholars, and increasing resources for hosting scholars from abroad.

Overall conclusion

The findings indicate ongoing and deepening erosion in the personal and professional circumstances of academic faculty members in Israel, alongside increased risk of brain drain. The report underscores an urgent need for systemic and targeted policy measures, with emphasis on supporting early-career researchers, strengthening international networks, and restoring working and research conditions in Israeli academia.

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Introduction

Israel's academic system has experienced significant negative impacts as a result of the war, with many faculty members and students affected either directly or indirectly. Some were called up for extended reserve duty, while others were involved in civilian volunteer activity. Additional negative effects were external, in the form of antisemitism and anti-Israel attitudes, especially at academic institutions abroad.

In December 2023, a survey was conducted on behalf of [The Israel Young Academy](#) and [Afik in Academia – Israeli Women Professors Forum](#). The survey aimed to identify the challenges facing Israeli academia since the start of the war (with an emphasis on senior academic faculty), and to help focus the work of heads of academic institutions and regulatory bodies both during the war and in the postwar period, when efforts to return to normalcy begin. This survey's [findings](#) were published in January 2024.

As the war dragged on, the same organizations conducted a follow-up survey in May 2025 (in the weeks preceding the first war with Iran). The purpose of this survey was to determine what had changed since the previous one, and to refocus the required responses.

This brief report presents the main findings from the follow-up survey, along with comparisons to the previous survey. We present the types of negative impact that faculty experienced in their academic work as a result of the war, as well as expected future negative impacts. Finally, we present the solutions and responses that faculty members believe are important for minimizing the negative impact of the war on Israel's higher education. The impacts and solutions are compared with the previous survey's findings.

Background on respondents

A total of 739 respondents participated in the survey, compared with 1,015 in the previous one. As can be seen in Appendix A, the respondent sample in the current survey was largely similar to that of the previous one in terms of institutional affiliation, disciplinary distribution, and demographics. The surveys differed in two variables: tenure and academic rank. A larger share

of respondents in the 2025 survey had tenure (68%) or held the rank of associate or full professor (59%), compared with the 2023 survey (61% and 52%, respectively).

About 4.3% of respondents reported that they or their family members were directly affected by the war (injury, death, or being taken hostage). About 4% reported that they were evacuated from their homes, and 11.9% reported that members of their research groups or their families were evacuated from their homes.

Findings

Negative impact on quality of life

We examined the extent and ways in which respondents were negatively affected by the war (on a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 indicates the most severe impact). As in the previous survey from 2023, we found that the mean negative impact on respondents was relatively severe emotionally, less so with respect to daily life, and lower still economically (Figure 1). However, we found a statistically significant increase in the economic negative impact compared with the previous survey. In addition, the share of respondents who were severely affected economically (those rating the impact as 4 or 5) more than doubled: 17.6% in 2025 versus 7.7% in 2023. On the other hand, we found a moderate but statistically significant decrease in the effect of the war on respondents' daily lives ($p=0.0138$; Figure 1).

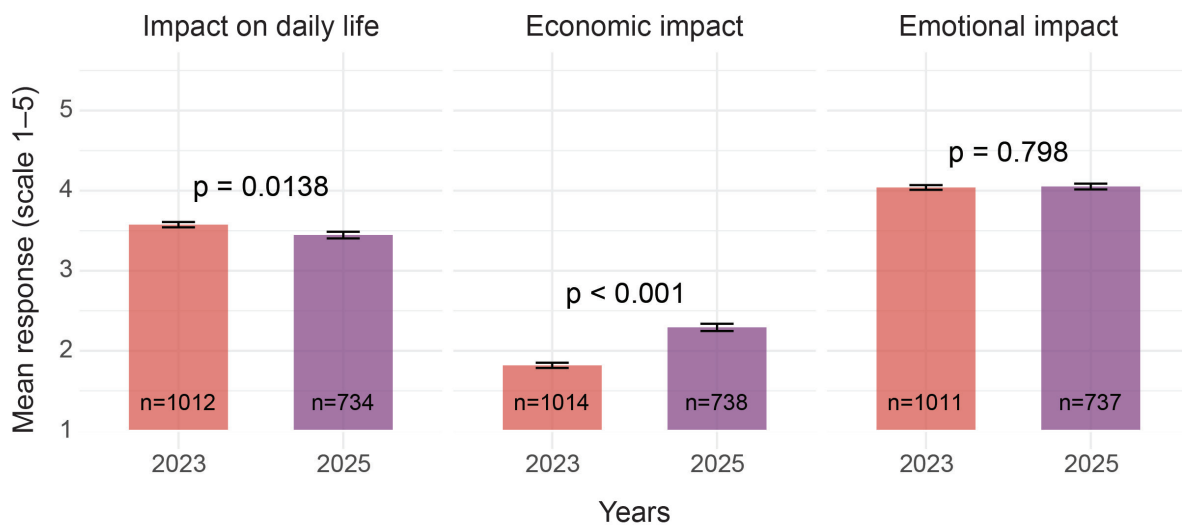


Figure 1 – Differences between previous (2023) and current (2025) surveys in the impact of the war on respondents' daily life, financial situation, and emotional well-being. Respondents rated impact on a scale from 1 to 5. The figure reports mean impact, standard error, and statistical significance of differences between years.

In the 2025 survey, we examined the degree of negative impact on respondents' emotional well-being, financial situation, and daily lives as a function of the following variables: academic affiliation, type of research (experimental/theoretical), academic field, gender, rank, tenure status, and the ages of their children. Academic affiliation and the ages of respondents'

children had no statistically significant effect. Having adult children in military service (31.2% of respondents) also had no statistically significant effect. Statistically significant effects of academic field and gender were observed only for emotional well-being: respondents in the exact sciences and engineering reported a smaller negative impact on their emotional well-being than respondents in other academic fields ($p < 0.001$); and men reported a smaller negative impact on their emotional well-being than women ($p < 0.001$), as shown in Figure 2 (which is not significantly different from the comparable 2023 figure).

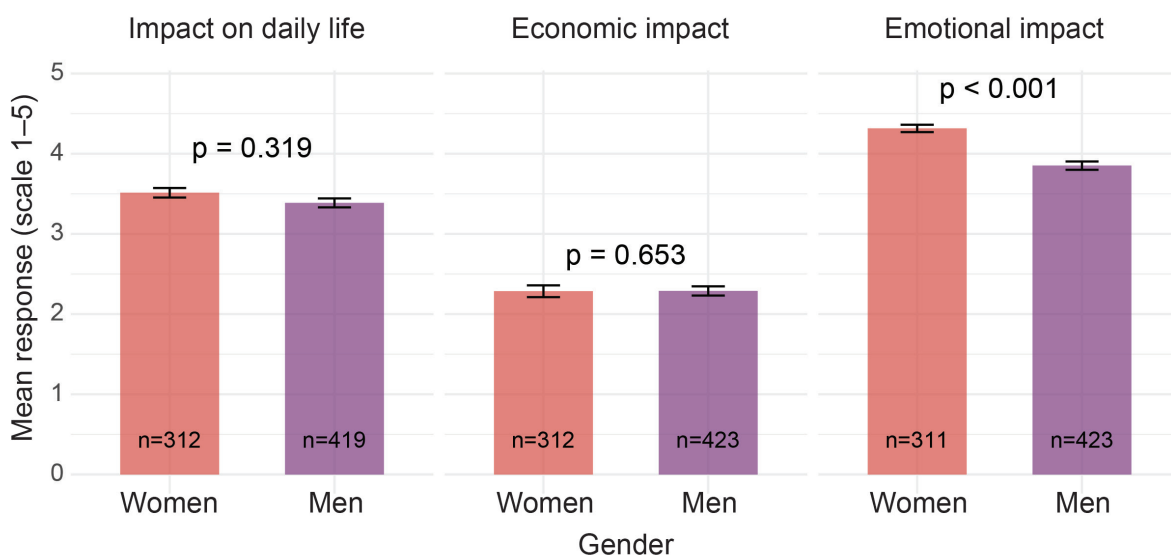


Figure 2 – Gender differences in the impact of the war on daily life, financial situation, and emotional well-being (2025 survey). Respondents rated impact on a scale from 1 to 5. The figure reports mean impact, standard error, and statistical significance of gender differences.

Rank and tenure status had statistically significant effects on the severity of impact on respondents' financial situations and daily lives. Respondents in lower academic ranks (lecturer and senior lecturer) reported that their financial situations were affected more severely ($p < 0.001$) than respondents in higher ranks (associate/full professor) and likewise reported a greater effect on their daily lives ($p < 0.05$). Similarly, non-tenured respondents reported that their financial situations were affected more severely than tenured faculty members, as well as a higher impact on their daily lives. Similar patterns were found in the previous survey, except that the 2023 survey also found statistically significant differences in the negative impact of the war on respondents' emotional well-being.

Figure 3 compares the degrees of negative impact reported by the subgroup of respondents who experienced a relatively severe negative impact (selecting 4 or 5 on the scale) due to reserve duty. This group comprised about 12.3% of respondents (86 individuals), among whom either the respondent or a family member was called up for reserve duty. Respondents in this subgroup were significantly affected in their daily lives ($p < 0.001$), but not emotionally or financially. This subgroup had a notably higher share of respondents in entry-level ranks (lecturer and senior lecturer) – 59.3%, compared with 41.2% in the overall sample.

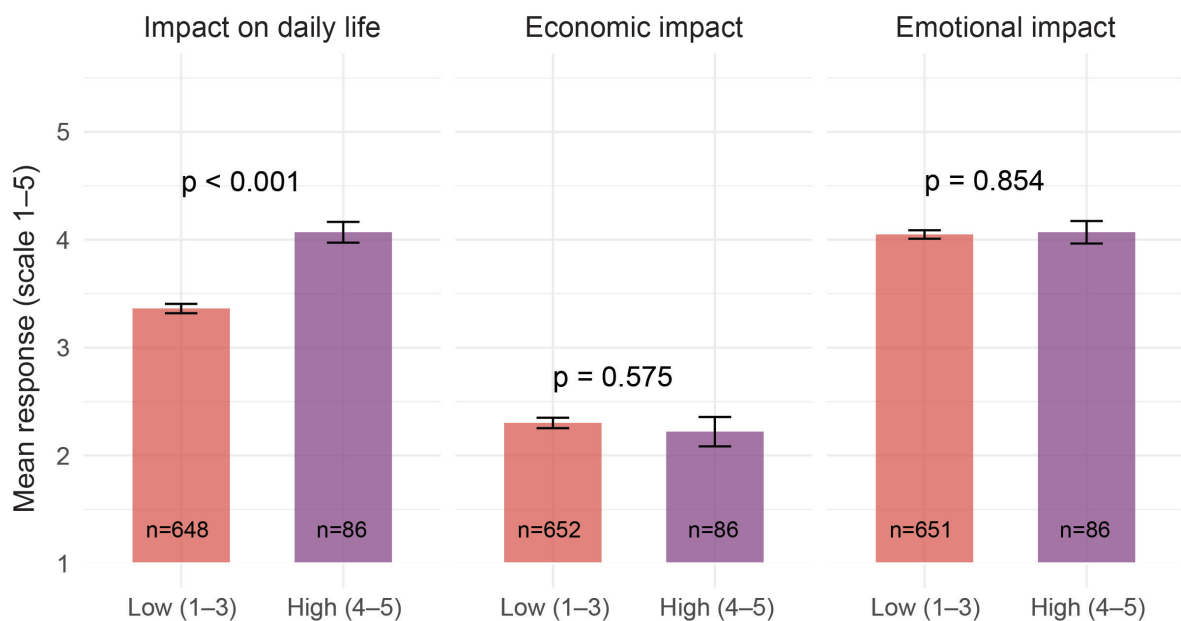


Figure 3 – Impact of the war on daily life, financial situation, and emotional well-being among respondents affected by their own or family members' call-up for reserve duty. Respondents rated the impact of reserve duty on a scale from 1 to 5. Based on these ratings, respondents were divided into two categories: high impact (4–5) and low impact (1–3). For each category, the figure reports mean impact on daily life, financial situation, and emotional well-being, along with standard error and statistical significance of differences between categories.

Negative impact on academic activity

Figure 4 presents all types of negative impact on academic activity that respondents were asked about in the 2025 survey, compared with 2023, ordered by severity. In 2025, the most severe negative impacts reported, from most to least severe, were related to visits in Israel by colleagues from abroad; recruitment of international students; the ability of respondents and their research groups to invest time in academic activity; and overall research quality.

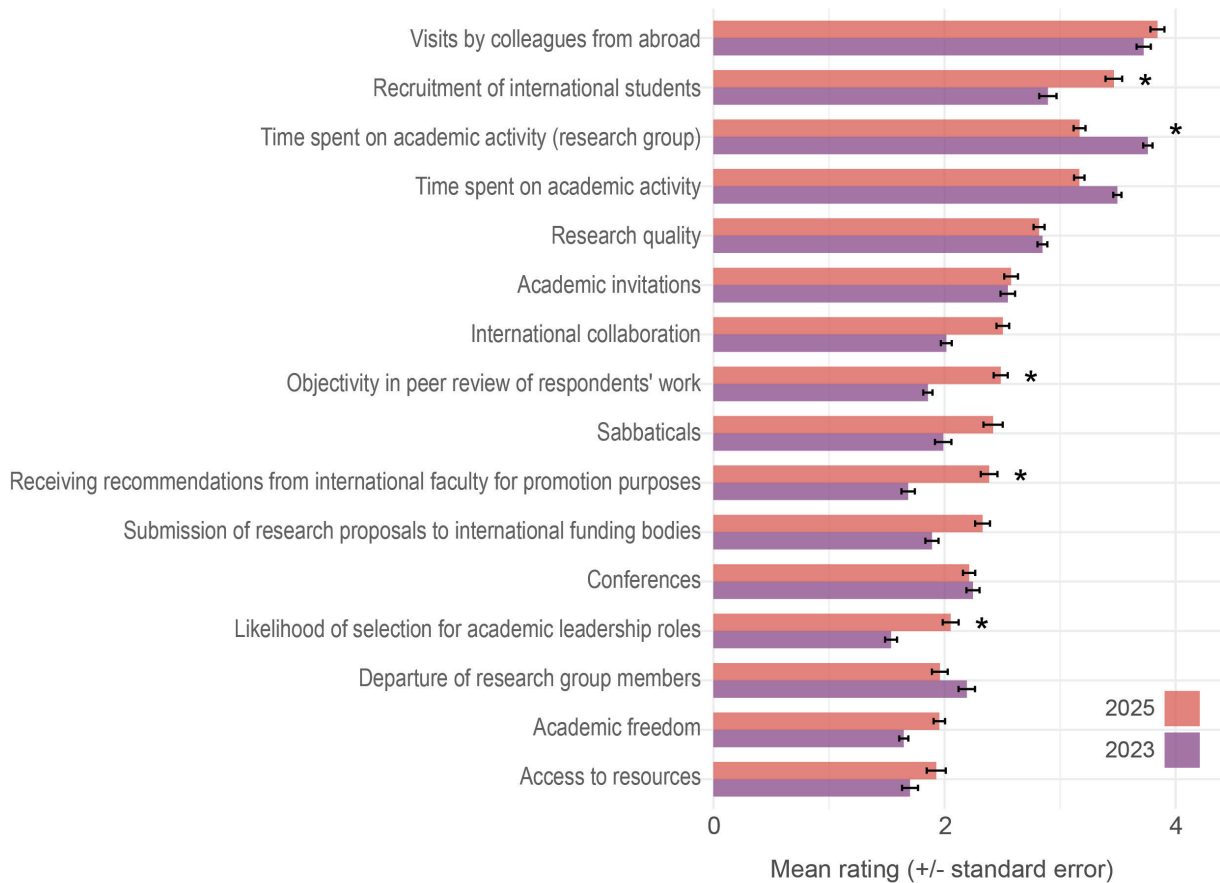


Figure 4 – Reports of academic impact across various parameters in previous (2023) and current (2025) surveys. Respondents rated impact on a scale from 1 to 5.

Negative impacts for which the difference between 2023 and 2025 exceeded 0.5 (and was statistically significant) are marked with an asterisk. The only negative impact that decreased significantly from the first survey to the second was the ability of respondents and their research groups to invest time in academic activity. By contrast, negative impact increased in four areas: peer review, recruitment of international students, receiving

letters of recommendation for promotion, and chances of selection for academic leadership roles. For each of these four areas, we checked for the possible effects of academic affiliation, gender, academic rank, and tenure status. We found that none of these factors had a statistically significant effect ($p < 0.05$) on recruitment of international students or chances of selection for academic leadership roles. Regarding receiving letters of recommendation for promotion, rank had a statistically significant effect ($p = 0.004$); i.e., lecturers reported greater concern about negative impact in this area. As for peer review, statistically significant effects were found for field of research and rank: the exact sciences and engineering were not as severely affected as other disciplines ($p < 0.001$), and lower-ranked respondents were affected more severely ($p = 0.04$). For all other variables examined, including gender and tenure status, no statistically significant effect was found. Finally, respondents reported an approximately 25% drop in the number of articles submitted for publication in the past year compared with the year prior to the events of October 7. This trend was statistically significant ($p < 0.001$).

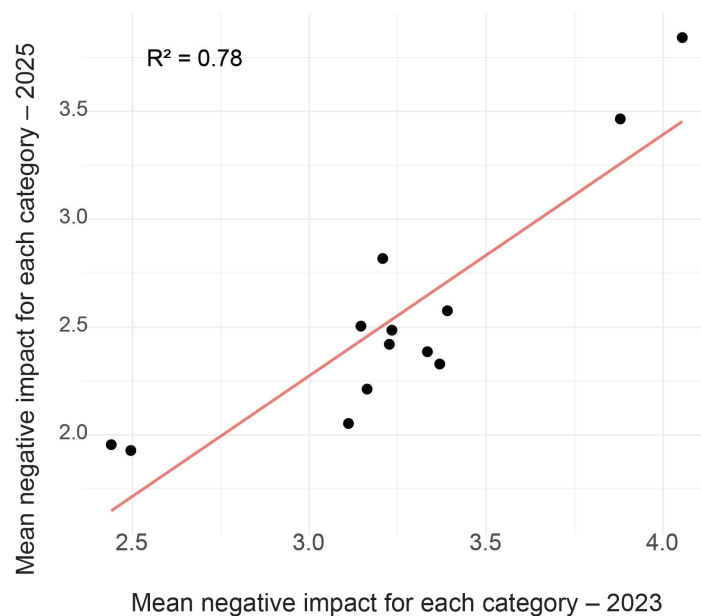


Figure 5 – Correlation between concerns about impact as measured in the previous survey (2023) and reports of actual impact in the current survey (2025).

Furthermore, we found a strong correlation ($R^2=0.78$) between respondents' concerns about negative impacts in the 2023 survey and the actual negative impacts measured in the 2025 survey (Figure 5).

Looking ahead (Figure 6), respondents reported the strongest concerns about future negative impacts in the following areas (from most to least concern): visits by colleagues from abroad, recruitment of international students, submission of research proposals to international funding bodies, receiving recommendations from international faculty for promotion purposes, and objectivity in peer review of respondents' work.

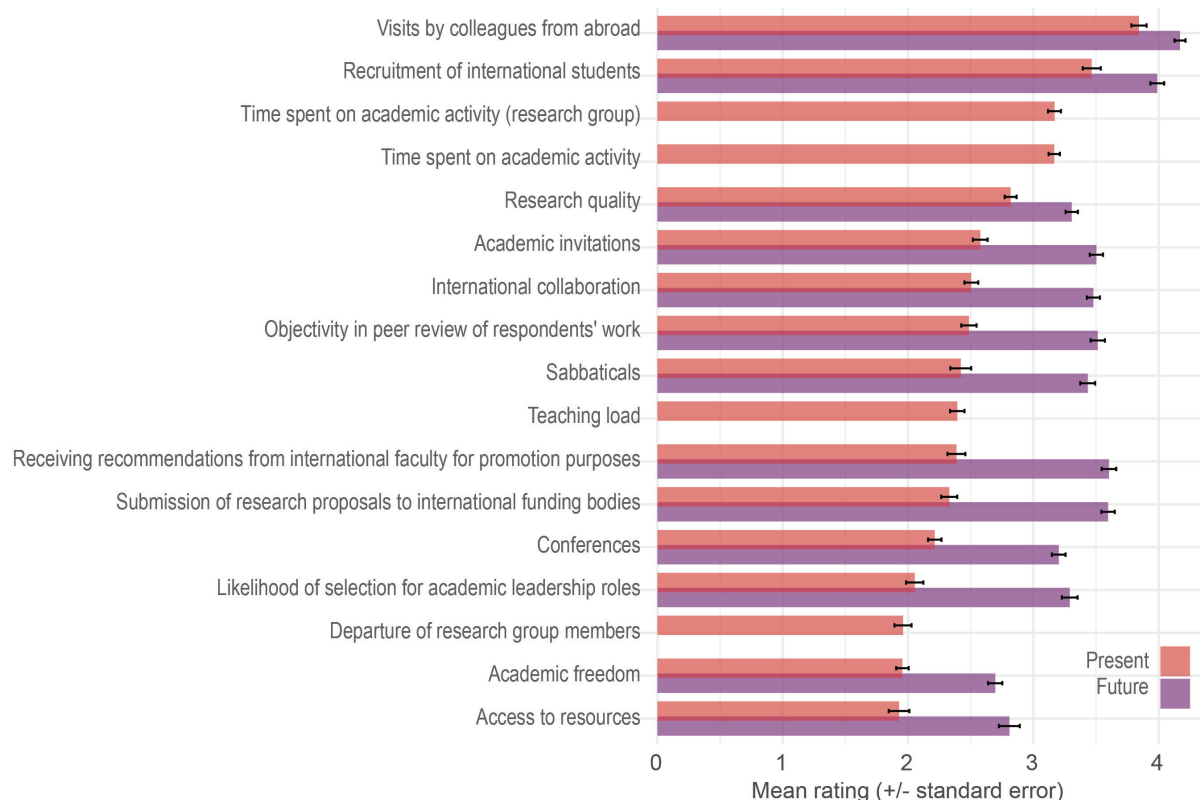


Figure 6 – Reports of current academic impact and concerns about future impact across various parameters. Respondents rated impact on a scale from 1 to 5.

Likelihood of leaving Israel

The likelihood of leaving Israel reported by respondents in 2025 was 11% higher than in 2023 (Figure 7), with the difference being statistically significant ($p=0.01$). In 2023, the mean likelihood of leaving Israel was 3.3 ± 0.08 , compared with 3.68 ± 0.09 in 2025 (on a scale of 1–10). A similar trend, with an even sharper increase, was found for the question: "How likely are you to leave Israel if offered an academic position at a leading institution abroad?" (Figure 7). For both questions, the share of respondents who rated the likelihood of leaving Israel above 6 increased substantially and significantly from 2023 to 2025 (Figure 8).

These findings continue an upward trend in the likelihood of leaving Israel that was previously observed in the 2023 survey, which assessed the effect of the judicial overhaul on these intentions. We also examined whether the likelihood of leaving Israel was affected by academic affiliation, gender, academic rank, and tenure status. We found that only rank and tenure status had statistically significant effects: non-tenured respondents ($p<0.001$) and those in lower ranks ($p<0.001$) reported that they were more likely to leave Israel, as can be seen in Figure 9 with respect to rank.

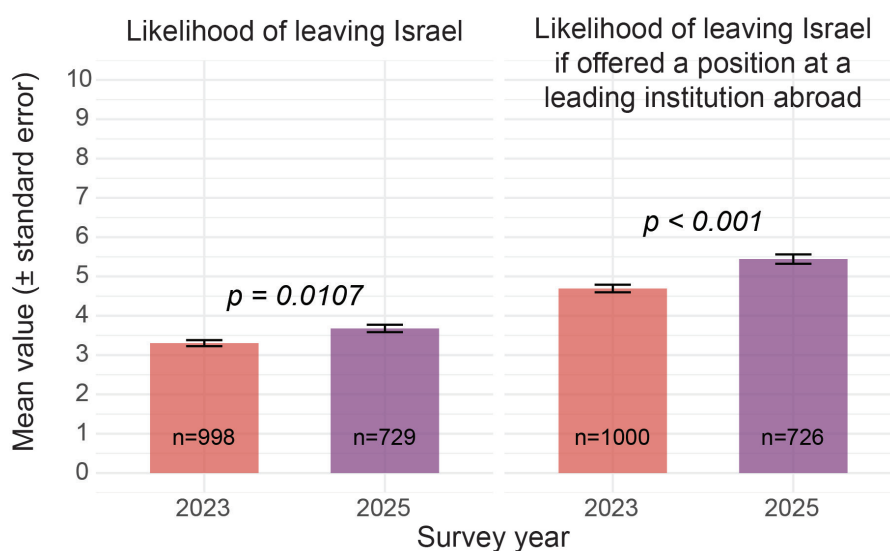


Figure 7 – Comparison of estimated likelihood of leaving Israel in previous (2023) and current (2025) surveys. Left: likelihood of leaving; right: likelihood of leaving if offered a position at a leading institution abroad. Ratings measured on a scale from 1 to 10.

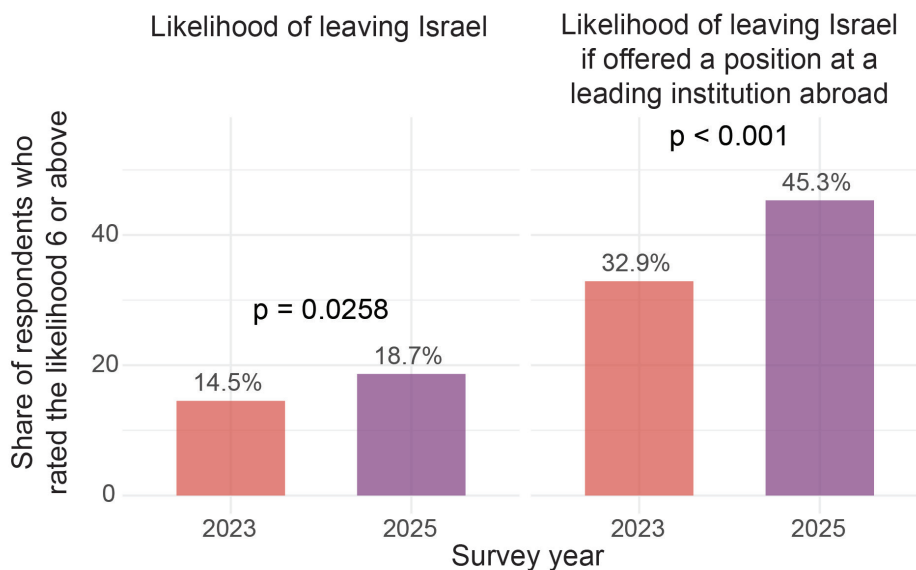


Figure 8 – Percentage of respondents rating 6 or above on likelihood of leaving Israel with or without a job offer at a leading institution, in previous (2023) and current (2025) surveys. Likelihood measured on a scale from 1 to 10.

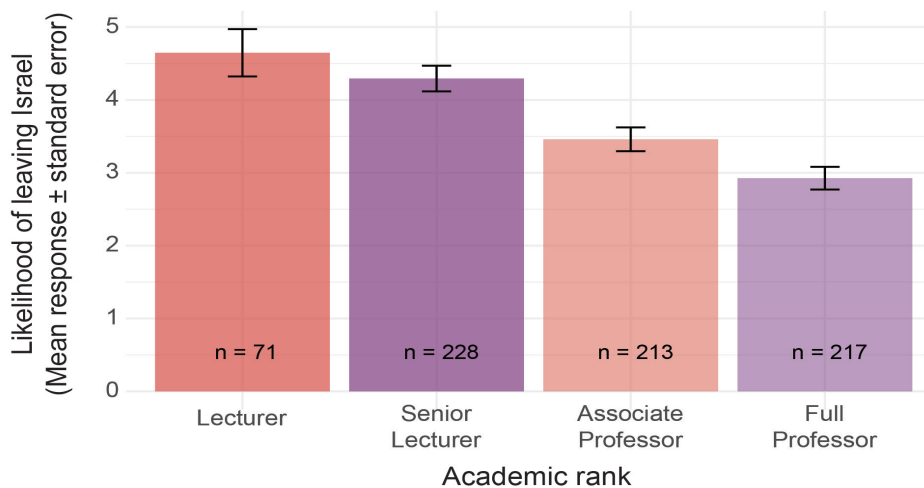


Figure 9 – Distribution of likelihood of leaving Israel by academic rank. Likelihood measured on a scale from 1 to 10.

In terms of concrete steps taken toward emigration, there was an increase in the share of respondents who reported taking such steps – from 27.4% in 2023 to 40.4% in 2025. For example, the share of respondents who obtained a foreign passport rose from 11.5% in 2023 to 18.4% in 2025.

Potential solutions to academic challenges

Figure 10 describes the favored solutions by order of preference. There were no statistically significant differences from 2023.

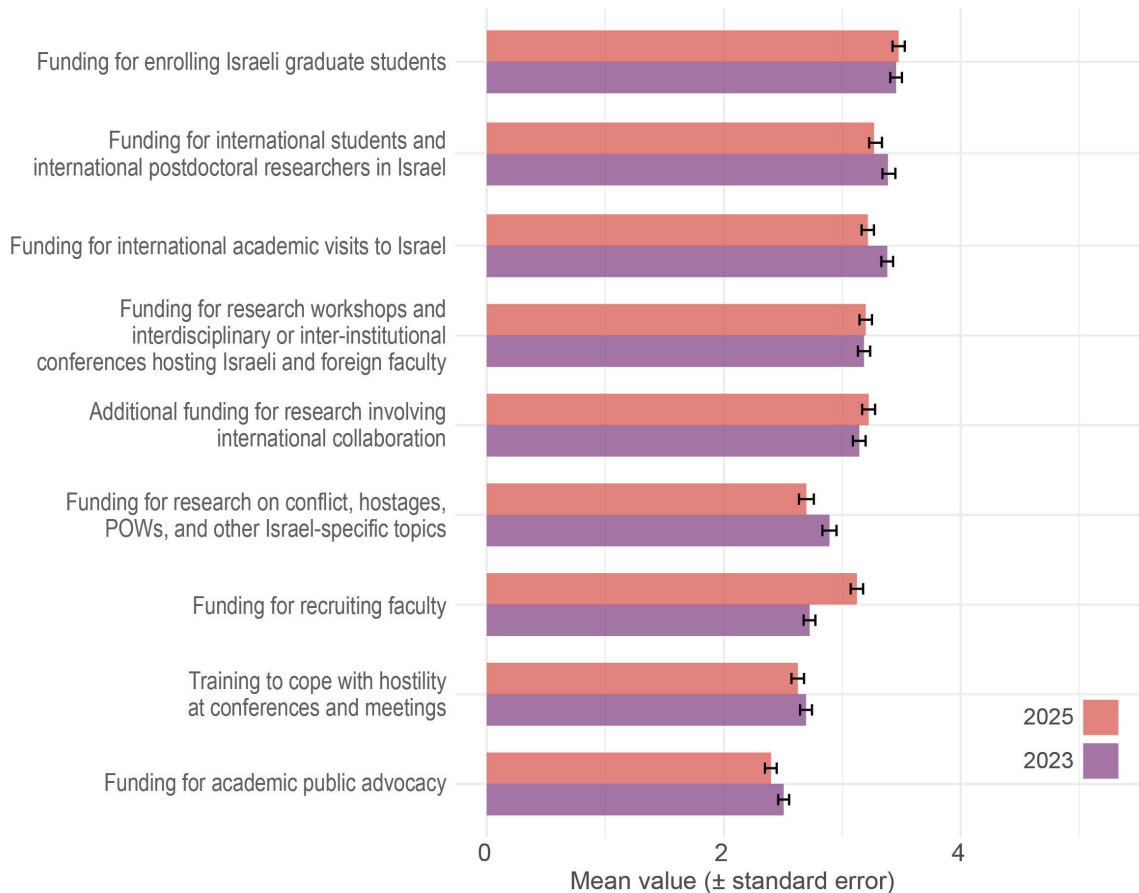


Figure 10 – Reports on degree of necessity of various solutions to academic challenges resulting from the war in previous (2023) and current (2025) surveys. Respondents rated degree of necessity of each solution on a scale from 1 to 5.



Summary

This survey found that, compared with the previous survey (conducted at the beginning of the war):

- Respondents have continued to report severe negative impacts from the fighting, both emotionally and in their daily lives.
- Reports of negative economic impact increased significantly, especially among early-career and non-tenured faculty.
- Respondents who reported severe negative impact due to reserve duty also reported a statistically significant negative impact on their daily lives.
- The greatest negative impacts were reported in the following areas: visits to Israel by colleagues from abroad, recruitment of international students, the ability of respondents and their research groups to invest time in academic activity, and research quality.
- A large and statistically significant increase was recorded in reports of negative impact in four areas: objectivity in peer review, recruitment of international students, receiving recommendations from international faculty for promotion purposes, and the likelihood of selection for academic leadership roles.
- For "receiving recommendations from international faculty for promotion purposes," rank had a statistically significant effect. For "objectivity in peer review," respondents in the exact sciences and engineering reported a negative impact that was less severe than for respondents in other fields, while lower-ranked respondents reported a more severe negative impact.
- **Respondents reported a statistically significant drop of about 25% in the number of articles submitted for publication in the past year compared with the year prior to the events of October 7.**
- We found a high correlation between respondents' concerns about negative impacts in the previous survey (2023) and their reports of actual negative impacts in the current survey. In the current survey, respondents reported the most serious concerns about future negative impacts in the following areas: visits by colleagues

from abroad, recruitment of international students, submission of research proposals to international funding bodies, receiving recommendations from international faculty for promotion purposes, and objectivity in peer review of respondents' work.

- **On average, respondents reported that they were 11% more likely to leave Israel than in the previous survey.** In particular, the share of respondents who reported a high likelihood of emigrating increased considerably and was statistically significant. These findings continued the upward trend in the likelihood of leaving Israel seen in previous surveys.
- Non-tenured and lower-ranked respondents reported higher likelihoods of emigrating.
- A notable increase was recorded in concrete steps taken toward emigration (such as obtaining a foreign passport).
- There were no statistically significant changes in the favored solutions for these challenges when compared with the previous survey.

Appendices

Appendix A. Demographics

We used chi-square tests and Fisher's exact test to determine differences in the distributions of respondents between the 2023 and 2025 surveys across several variables: gender, academic fields, institutions, marital status, research type (experimental/theoretical), tenure status, and academic rank. Significant differences ($p < 0.05$) were found in only two variables – tenure status and academic rank. In the 2025 survey, the proportion of tenured respondents was higher than in the 2023 survey and so was the proportion of respondents at the higher ranks (associate professor and full professor) (Figures 11 and 12).

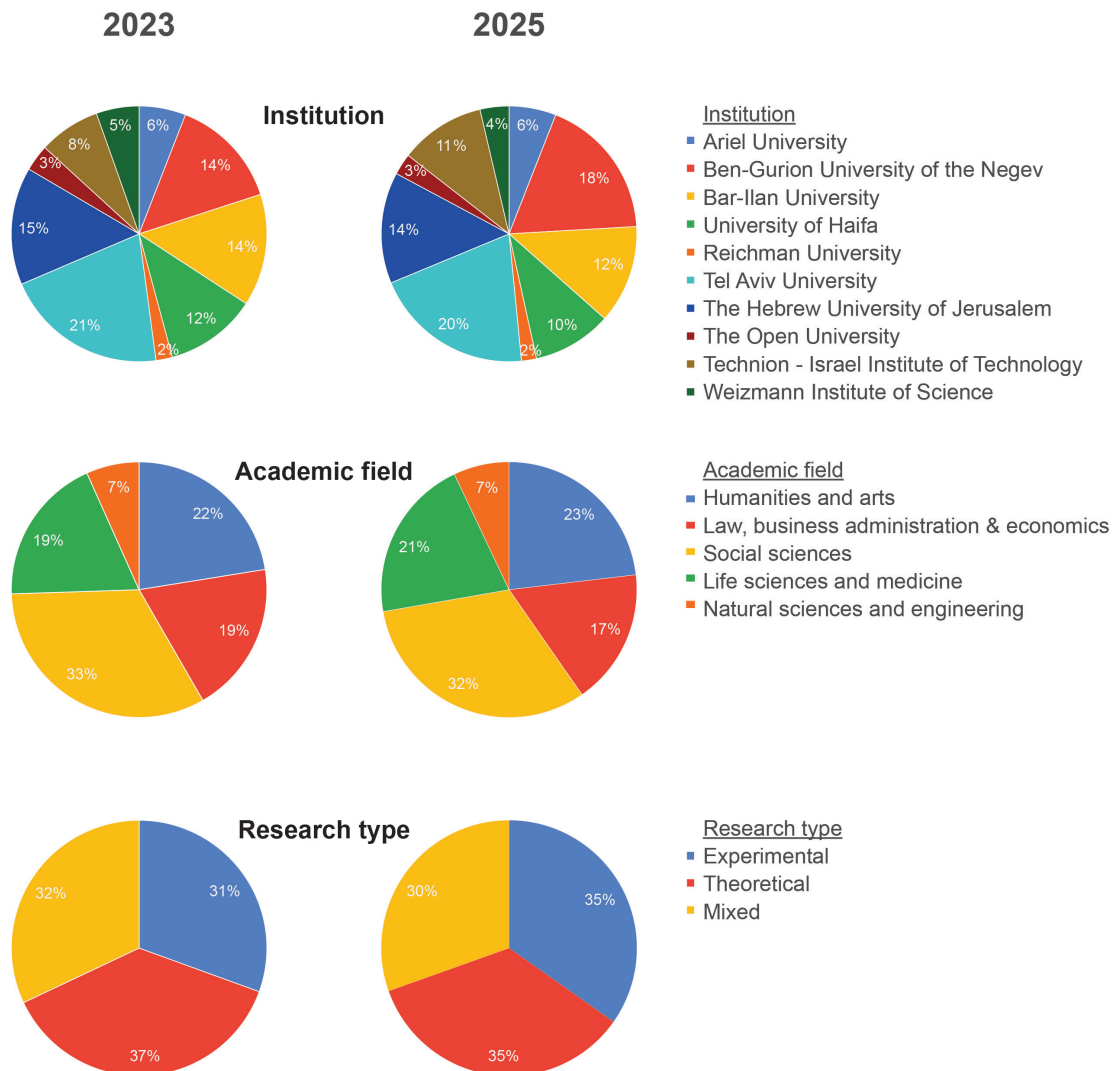


Figure 11 – Respondent distributions by institution, academic field, and research type.

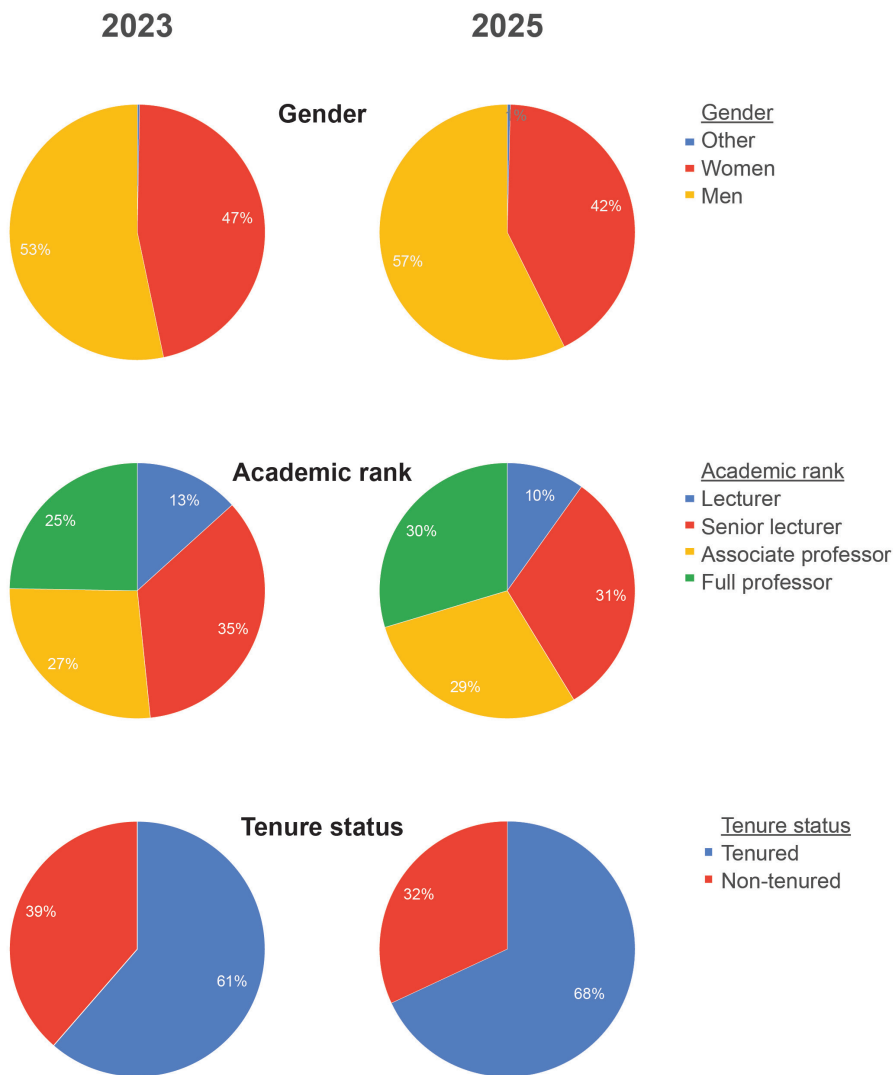


Figure 12 – Respondent distributions by gender, academic rank, and tenure status.

Appendix B.

Quantitative survey questions and response statistics

This appendix presents the mean, standard deviation, and median for each quantitative question not included in the main text, along with the number of respondents. Some questions included an "N/A" option. As per survey instructions, non-responses were coded as "N/A" when available, or as "1" (lowest scale value) otherwise. The data below reflect this coding.

Question	Mean	SD	Median	Number of respondents who did not select N/A
Quantifying the negative impact				
To what extent have the fighting and its consequences negatively affected your day-to-day life in the past year?	3.45	1.11	4	734
To what extent have the fighting and its consequences negatively affected your emotional state in the past year?	4.05	0.99	4	737
To what extent have the fighting and its consequences negatively affected your financial situation in the past year?	2.29	1.24	2	738
Impact areas				
I or my partner was called up for reserve duty	1.52	1.23	1	698
Extra-academic activity related to the war (volunteering, support/protest activity, etc.)	2.89	1.24	3	721
Members of my research group or their partners were called up for reserve duty	3.18	1.39	3	470
Members of my research group left Israel due to the war [actual impact]	1.96	1.36	1	396
Increase in teaching load [actual impact]	2.39	1.37	2	568
General decline in my ability to invest time in academic activity [actual impact]	3.17	1.23	3	735
General decline in the ability of members of my research group to invest time in academic activity [actual impact]	3.17	1.19	3	529
Objectivity in peer review of my work (articles, books, research proposals, etc.) [actual impact]	2.61	1.34	2	702
Objectivity in peer review of my work (articles, books, research proposals, etc.) [concern about future impact]	3.54	1.26	4	721
Impaired academic freedom (e.g., ability to publish on certain topics) [actual impact]	1.95	1.33	1	708
Impaired academic freedom (e.g., ability to publish on certain topics) [concern about future impact]	2.7	1.52	3	715
Colleagues from abroad avoiding visits to Israel [actual impact]	3.87	1.32	4	639



Question	Mean	SD	Median	Number of respondents who did not select N/A
Colleagues from abroad avoiding visits to Israel [concern about future impact]	4.17	1.14	5	672
Invitations to visit / give talks / conduct research abroad [actual impact]	2.58	1.48	2	627
Invitations to visit / give talks / conduct research abroad [concern about future impact]	3.5	1.38	4	681
Receiving invitations for / completing sabbaticals at institutions abroad [actual impact]	2.42	1.57	2	357
Receiving invitations for / completing sabbaticals at institutions abroad [concern about future impact]	3.43	1.41	4	556
Access to research equipment / laboratories / databases outside Israel [actual impact]	1.93	1.37	1	277
Access to research equipment / laboratories / databases outside Israel [concern about future impact]	2.81	1.54	3	339
International collaborations (establishment, development, and maintenance) [actual impact]	2.5	1.41	2	656
International collaborations (establishment, development, and maintenance) [concern about future impact]	3.48	1.36	4	692
Recruitment of international students [actual impact]	3.47	1.5	4	432
Recruitment of international students [concern about future impact]	3.99	1.25	5	513
Submission of research proposals to international funding bodies [actual impact]	2.33	1.44	2	505
Submission of research proposals to international funding bodies [concern about future impact]	3.6	1.35	4	628
Opportunities to present at international conferences [actual impact]	2.21	1.37	2	654
Opportunities to present at international conferences [concern about future impact]	3.2	1.43	3	697
Receiving recommendations from international faculty for purposes of promotion [actual impact]	2.39	1.45	2	407
Receiving recommendations from international faculty for purposes of promotion [concern about future impact]	3.6	1.37	4	556
Likelihood of selection for academic leadership roles (leading professional societies, editorial positions at journals / publishing houses) [actual impact]	2.05	1.37	1	396
Likelihood of selection for academic leadership roles (leading professional societies, editorial positions at journals / publishing houses) [concern about future impact]	3.29	1.44	3	528
Research quality in general [actual impact]	2.82	1.29	3	725
Research quality in general [concern about future impact]	3.31	1.33	3	717



Question	Mean	SD	Median	Number of respondents who did not select N/A
Institutional response				
To what extent is your academic institution aware of your difficulties and working to help? [aware of difficulties]	2.78	1.3	3	703
To what extent is your academic institution aware of your difficulties and working to help? [working to help]	2.39	1.26	2	695
Coping strategies				
Funding for faculty recruitment	3.12	1.37	3	679
Funding for academic public advocacy activities (e.g., publishing expert opinions, opinion columns, podcasts on academic platforms worldwide).	2.4	1.29	2	679
Funding for international graduate students or postdocs in Israel [level of support]	3.28	1.33	3	618
Funding for Israeli graduate students or postdocs in Israel [level of support]	3.48	1.31	4	641
Funding for international academic visits to Israel [level of support]	3.22	1.32	3	632
Funding for research on conflict, hostages, POWs, and other Israel-specific topics [level of support]	2.7	1.35	3	466
Additional funding for research involving international collaboration (similar to that which existed in the Israel Science Foundation and was canceled this year) [level of support]	3.22	1.33	3	601
Funding for research workshops and interdisciplinary or inter-institutional conferences (such as AcadeMIX), combining Israeli faculty and faculty from abroad [level of support]	3.2	1.31	3	610
Training to cope with hostility at conferences and meetings [level of support]	2.62	1.32	3	631
Moving abroad				
How likely are you to leave Israel permanently (%)? (0–100)	3.68	2.56	3	729
How likely are you to leave Israel if offered an academic position at a leading institution abroad (%)? (0–100)	5.44	3.22	6	726
How many new articles (not previously rejected) did you submit for publication in the past year? (Please enter number only)	3.33	7.48	3	667
How many new articles (not previously rejected) did you submit for publication in the year before October 7? (Please enter number only)	4.73	17.2	3	656