

# [***US Support for Israel Hits New Low as Iran Threat Looms***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BSD-6G21-DY68-10M9-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Byline:** David Brennan

**Highlight:** Americans of all political persuasions are increasingly disapproving of Israel's Gaza war, a new poll suggests.

**Body**

President [*Joe Biden*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/joe-biden?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) on Wednesday declared that American backing for Israel is "ironclad," as the country braces for an expected Iranian retaliation for the assassination of a top Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps commander in Syria this month.

Israel is on high alert for the promised Iranian strike, which U.S. officials said on Wednesday could be "imminent" and may involve drones or cruise missiles.

"We're gonna do all we can to protect Israel's security," Biden told reporters.

But new poll results released this week show that American public support for Israel is waning across the political spectrum amid its devastating offensive on the Gaza Strip, a conflict that has unleashed fresh violence across the Middle East and put pressure on U.S. forces there.

Gallup's latest survey of American sentiment on Israel was published this week and polled 1,016 people across the U.S. between March 1 and 20. The survey was conducted before Israel's killing of several [*World Central Kitchen aid workers*](https://www.newsweek.com/israel-aid-strike-food-weapon-war-gaza-hamas-1886886#:~:text=European%20Union%20foreign%20policy%20chief,aid%20in%20the%20Gaza%20Strip.?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) and before the latest tense exchanges between Biden and Israeli Prime Minister [*Benjamin Netanyahu*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/benjamin-netanyahu?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) regarding Israeli policy in the Strip.

Democrats, [*Republicans*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/republicans?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) and independents have all become less supportive of Israel's operation in Gaza than they were in December. Then, a narrow majority approved of Israeli conduct. The latest figures show that a majority, 55 percent, disapprove of Israel's actions, while 36 percent approve.

Approval has dropped by 18 percentage points among [*Democrats*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/democrats?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) (75 percent now disapproving versus 18 percent approving) and independents (60 percent now disapproving versus 29 percent approving), and a 7-point drop among Republicans (30 percent now disapproving versus 64 percent approving).

*Newsweek* has contacted an Israeli Foreign Ministry spokesperson by email for comment.

"Seeing this war play out in the headlines, on social media, in the images, has shifted even people who are more mainstream Democrats, and a lot of people in the center who have watched this unfold in a way that they did not expect," Julie Norman, a professor of ***politics*** and international relations at University College London, told *Newsweek*.

"I think the strike on the aid workers and some of the other developments that we've seen since the poll was taken have probably shifted those numbers even further down."

Israel's war is now 6 months old, with more than 33,000 Palestinians reported killed by Gaza Health Ministry numbers cited by the Associated Press. Swaths of the impoverished Strip have been levelled, with the majority of its population displaced. The Gaza operation followed [*Hamas*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/hamas?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships)' October 7 attack that killed about 1,200 people in Israel and saw more than 250 taken back to [*Gaza as hostages*](https://www.newsweek.com/how-many-israeli-hostages-still-held-6-months-gaza-1887290?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships).

Israeli forces have now largely withdrawn from their positions in Gaza, but Israeli commanders and politicians have vowed to continue their effort to "eradicate" Hamas and free the hostages still held. Netanyahu has claimed to be "one step" from victory in Gaza, but the reality [*appears more complicated*](https://www.newsweek.com/israel-mission-accomplished-problem-hamas-gaza-strip-west-bank-1844770?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships).

U.S.-Israeli ties have been chilled somewhat by the ongoing war and Israel's alleged failure to ensure adequate humanitarian aid for Gaza or reduce the rate of civilian casualties being inflicted despite constant urgings from the White House to do so.

A standoff over the southern border city of Rafah—known as [*Gaza's "last refuge"*](https://www.newsweek.com/israeli-advance-gaza-last-refuge-rafah-catastrophic-1866086?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) and sheltering more than 1 million people displaced by the fighting elsewhere—has laid bare the Biden-Netanyahu divergence. The president said this week that Netanyahu's approach to the war has been a "mistake."

Still, the U.S. has refused to freeze military aid to Israel and for the most part has continued providing diplomatic cover at the [*United Nations*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/united-nations?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships), with the notable exception of the American abstention on a Security Council vote calling for an immediate ceasefire in March.

Despite [*anger within his own party*](https://www.newsweek.com/https-www-newsweek-com-democrat-super-tuesday-joe-biden-primary-result-uncommitted-1876269?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships), Biden appears to have so far escaped an approval rating hit due to his continued support for Israel's war. The Gallup poll found that Biden's overall approval is now at 40 percent compared with 37 percent in October and November.

[*Link to Image*](https://d.newsweek.com/en/full/2376963/palestinians-pictured-returning-khan-younis-gaza.jpg)

**Graphic**

Palestinians pictured returning to Khan Younis Gaza

Yasser Qudaih/Anadolu via Getty Images

Black smoke rises behind Palestinians returning to their homes in Khan Younis, in the southern Gaza Strip, on April 11, 2024. Israel has said its war will continue despite the withdrawal of most troops from the Palestinian exclave.

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