

Explainer: A Post-Netanyahu “Change” Government in Israel

Top lines:

- **Bye Bye, Bibi.** After four elections in two years, an ideologically diverse coalition is poised to end the reign of Israel’s longest serving Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu.
- **It Ain’t Over Til Knesset Votes on the Coalition.** That may not happen until June 14. Meanwhile, Netanyahu is trying to unravel the coalition and engaging in incitement.
- **Narrow and Unstable.** With a bare majority of 61 in the 120-seat Knesset, the coalition will be unstable. Every member will have to vote together in order to get anything done.
- **Leftists and Centrists in Power.** While Naftali Bennett of Yamina will be PM for the first two years, 42 of 61 MKs in the coalition will be from center or left parties.
- **Ra’am Makes History.** For the first time since Israel’s founding, a party representing Palestinian citizens of Israel -- the Islamist party, Ra’am -- will be part of the government.

Who’s In: (Parties in the coalition roughly from L to R, related to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict)

- **Meretz (6):** Zionist left party led by **Nitzan Horowitz**, who will be Minister of Health. The party will also lead the Ministries of Environmental Protection and Regional Cooperation.
- **Labor (7):** This once-dominant party of Israeli politics is being rebuilt by **Merav Michaeli**, who will be Minister of Transportation. Omer Barlev will be Minister of Public Security.
- **Ra’am (4):** **Mansour Abbas**, leader of this Islamist party, negotiated agreements to benefit Palestinian citizens of Israel in planning, housing, and fighting violence.
- **Yesh Atid (17):** **Yair Lapid** leads this centrist party, the coalition’s largest. He will be Foreign Minister for the first two years of the rotation agreement and then Prime Minister.
- **Blue and White (8):** His centrist party diminished after voters punished it for joining Netanyahu in the previous government, **Benny Gantz** will remain Defense Minister.
- **Yisrael Beiteinu (7):** **Avigdor Lieberman**, head of this right-wing and firmly secular party that caters to immigrants from the former USSR, will hold the post of Finance Minister.
- **New Hope (6):** Formed by **Gideon Saar** and other Likudniks who renounced Bibi, this party will lead both the Ministries of Justice and Education in the new government.
- **Yamina (6 of its 7 MKs):** **Naftali Bennett**, who supports annexation of much of the West Bank, will be Israel’s first Orthodox PM. **Ayelet Shaked** will be Interior Minister.

Who’s Out: (Parties in the opposition roughly from L to R; also includes one Yamina MK)

- **Joint List (6):** Big drop from 15 seats, due to Ra’am’s departure and lower Arab turnout.
- **United Torah Judaism (7)** and **Shas (9):** Since 1977, ultra-Orthodox parties have typically been represented in government. This will be a relatively rare exception.
- **Likud (30):** First time in the opposition since Netanyahu became Prime Minister in 2009.
- **Religious Zionist (6):** Includes Kahanists. Bibi’s support helped the party enter Knesset.