



Presentation for Freedom Advocacy
Network, 28 June 2024

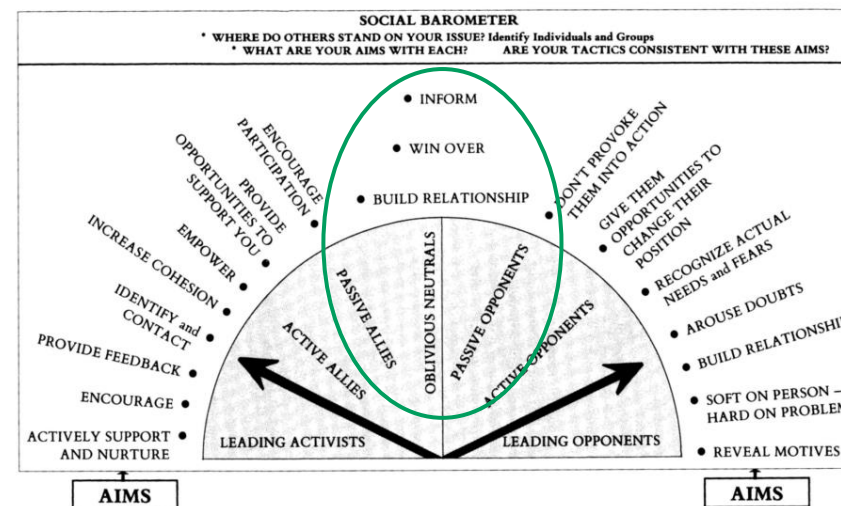
Survey results

What helps or hinders people
in speaking up for Palestinian
human rights?

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Miyara (and acknowledgements to many others)

About Bystanders No More (BNM) and the survey

- BNM is a global volunteer group that wishes to help 'supportive but silent' people find ways to show their support for Palestinian human rights.
- To help understand the reasons that help or hinder people from speaking up, BNM conducted an anonymous survey in May-June 2024 (n = 248).



I wish to acknowledge inspiration from David H. Albert: "People Power — Applying Non Violence Theory" New Society Publishers, Philadelphia, PA, 1985.

Survey construction and distribution

- This was not university-based research, but the same ethical principles were applied: informed consent, voluntary participation, anonymous.
- Questions were informed by key themes appearing on social media.
- We're not sure who the survey reached as it first went to BNM's trusted networks who were then invited to share it on with their trusted networks.

Survey questions

Demographics:

- Country
- Age
- Ethnicity
- Gender

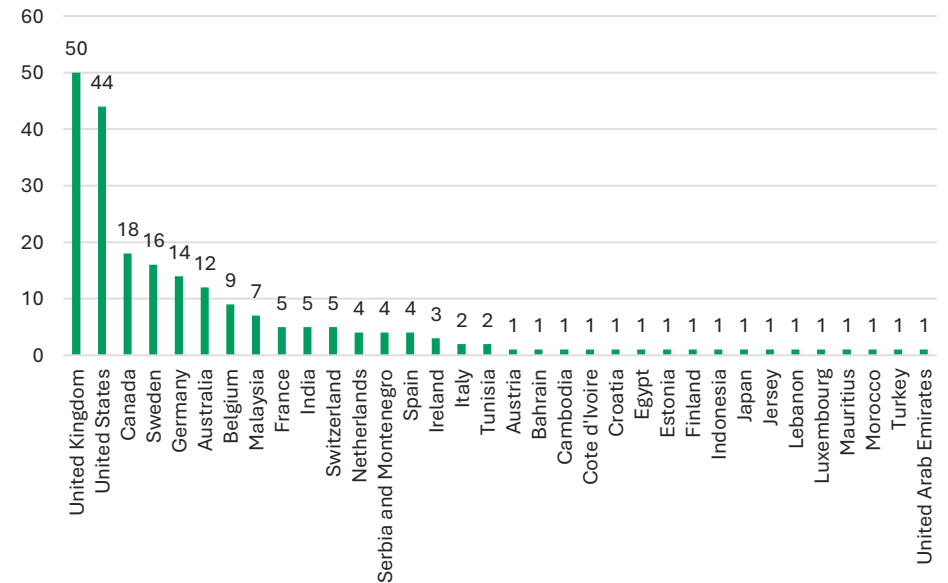
Content:

- Are you pro human rights?
- Have you shown public support?
- Time lag for showing public support?
- Reasons for delaying public support?

Country

- 221 of 248 answered this question.
- Most live in the UK (22.6%), US (19.9%), Canada (8.1%), and Sweden (7.2%).
- More research is required in the Global South. However, BNM’s target audience is silent citizens in Western countries (esp. nations providing weapons, financial support, and/or diplomatic cover to Israel).

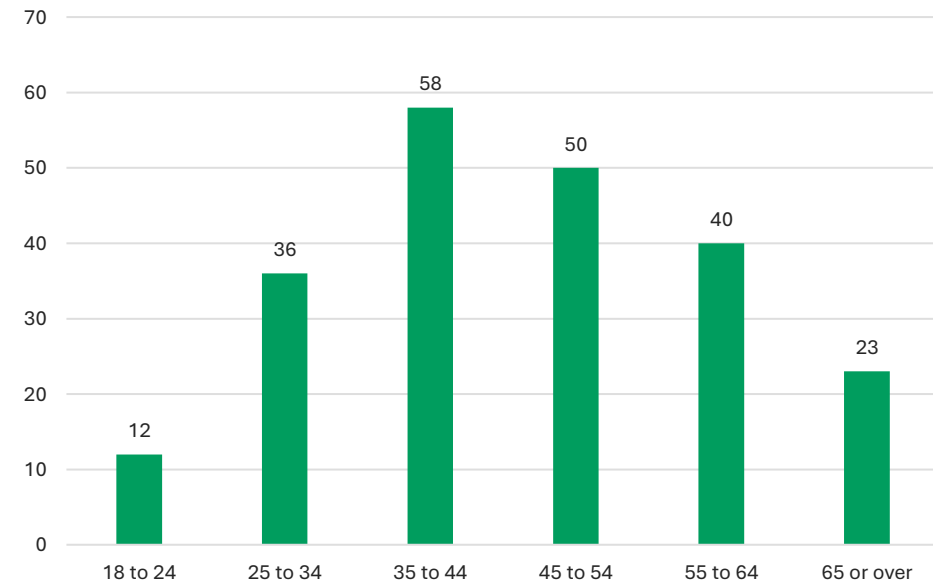
Fig 1. Which country do you live in?



Age

- 219 of 248 answered this question.
- The majority were between 35-44 years (26.5%) and 45-54 years (22.8%).
- If the survey reached an equal number of people from each age group, the results suggest that interest in Palestinian human rights follows a normal distribution ('bell-curve'). If not (more likely), the results reflect BNM's network.

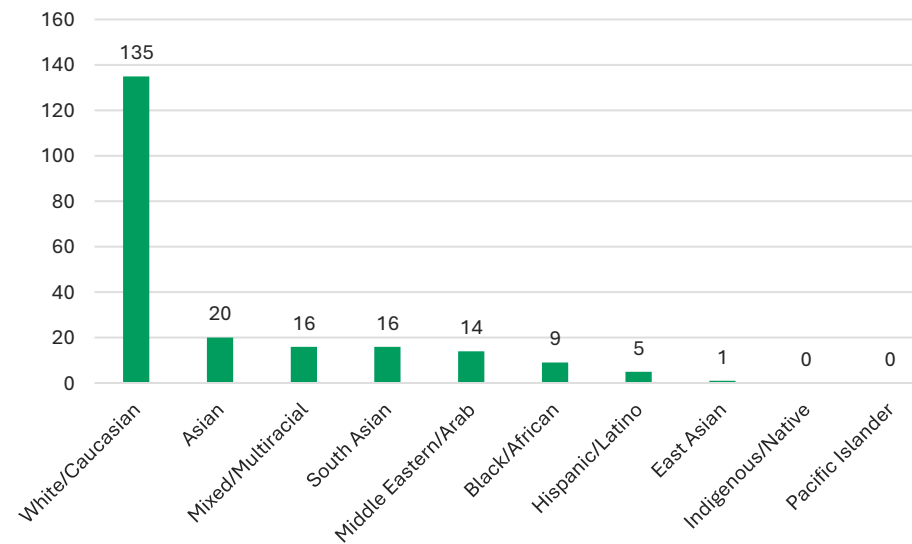
Fig 2. Which age group do you belong to?



Ethnicity

- 216 of 248 answered this question.
- The majority identified as White/Caucasian (62.5%), even though BNM's founding members are diverse.
- More research is required about what differences in survey uptake says about who are commonly bystanders and why.

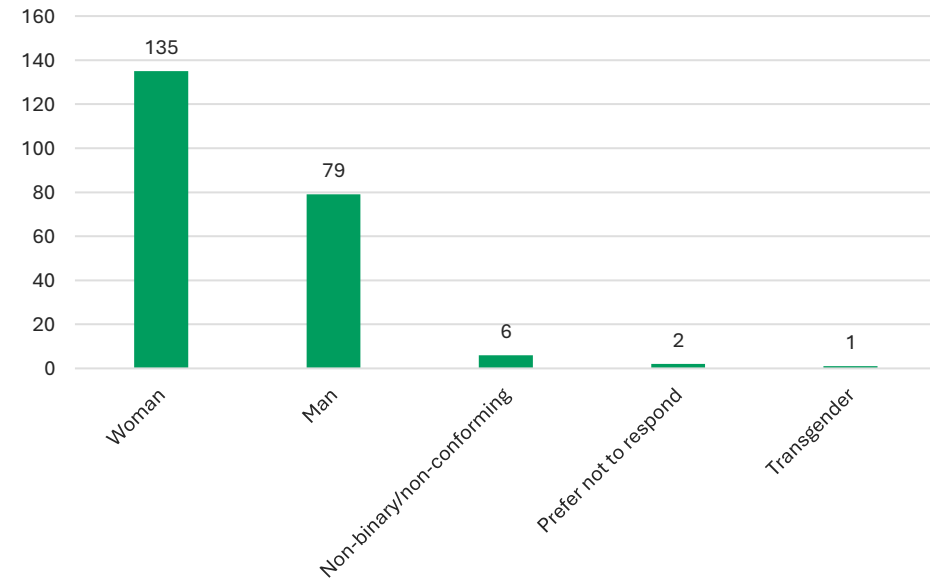
Fig 3. How would you describe your race or ethnicity?



Gender

- 223 of 248 answered this question.
- The majority identified as women (61%).
- Again, more research is required about what differences in survey uptake says about who are commonly bystanders and why.

Fig 4. How would you describe your gender?



A note on the call for ‘future research’

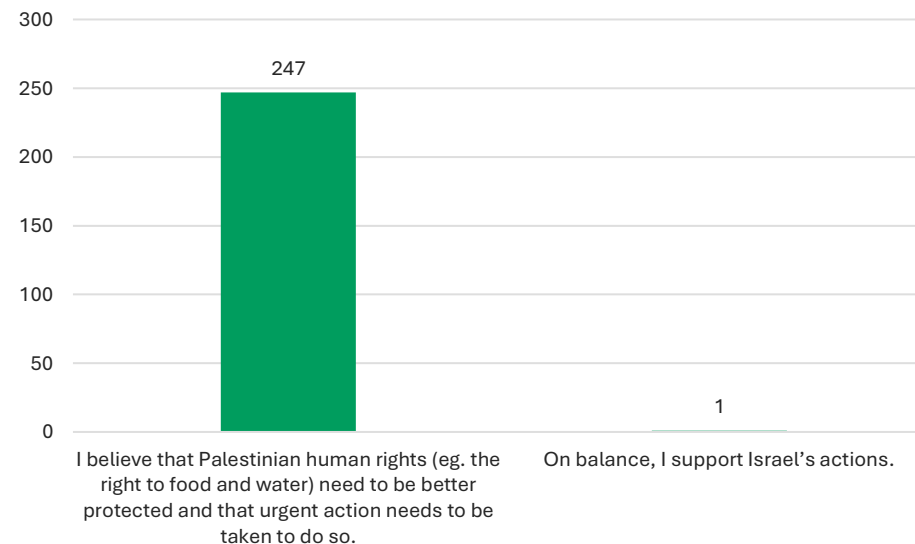
- Research that helps us understand important observations (e.g. gender differences in survey uptake) should be in service of permanent ceasefire, peace and justice.
- Palestinians are not ‘case studies’ to satisfy our curiosity about human nature. Their lives have not been lived to write research papers.

Pro human rights?

“Can we actually summarize it into food and water? Is it actually only that? Maybe that statement makes it a bit biased to support and say yes. It’s an easy way to support with such statement, So, when it is much more bigger than that, do I have to speak it out?”

- All 248 answered this question.
- Essentially all pro human rights (99.6%).
- However, had a different example than the right to food and water been used, different results may have been obtained. Future research that explores all dimensions of human rights is required.

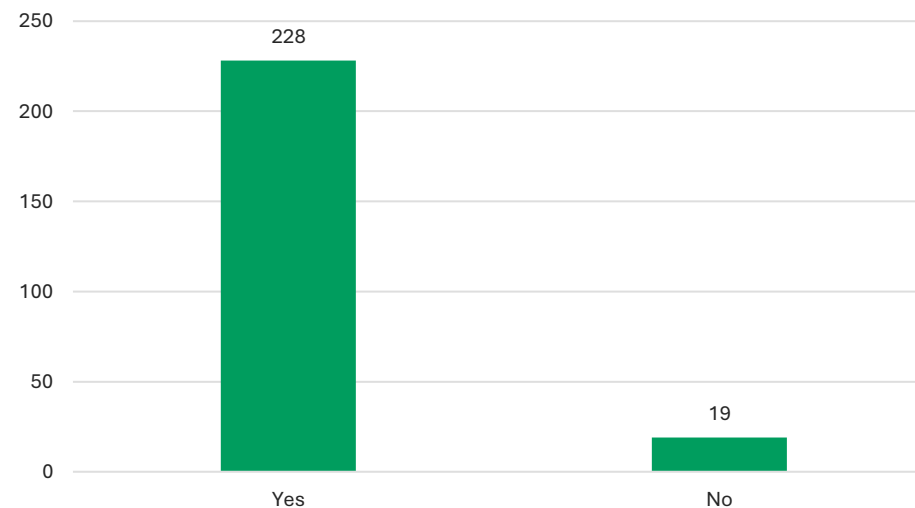
Fig 5. What is your personal position on the Israeli attacks on Gaza and on Palestinian human rights?



Shown public support?

- 247 of 248 answered this question.
- Nearly all have shown public support (92.3%).
- Given that nearly all support Palestinian human rights (99.6%), alignment between values and behaviours is high in this sample.

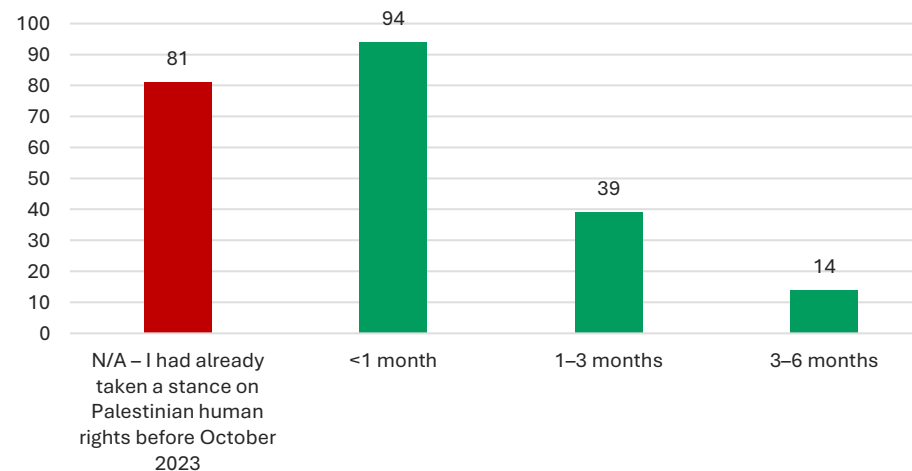
Fig 6. Have you taken a public stance in favour of Palestinian human rights (e.g. the right to food and water)?



Time lag for showing public support?

- 228 of 248 answered this question.
- A third (35.5%) have shown public support before 7 Oct 2023. Of the remaining, 63.9% showed support < 1 month later, 26.5% 1-3 months later, and 9.5% 3-6 months later.
- This shows strong support for human rights generally, but for some a slow approach in assessing what was occurring until 3 months later (26 Jan 2024) when the case for plausible genocide was established by the ICJ.

Fig 7. If you have taken a public stance in favour of Palestinian human rights (e.g. the right to food and water): how long did it take after the October 7, 2023 attack for you to do so?



Reasons for delaying public support?

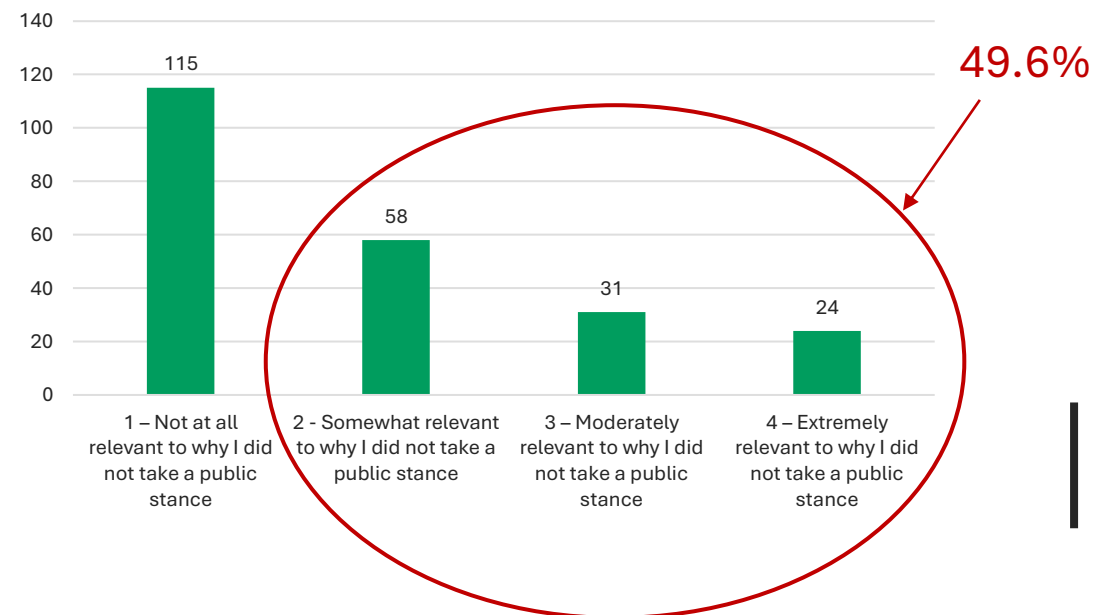
“Please think back to the time when you did not take a public stance about the human rights of Palestinians (such as the right to food and water). Consider the reasons below that may have contributed to your decision.”

- 11 possible reasons were presented with a 4-point rating scale.
- 1 = Not at all relevant to why I did not take a public stance.
- 4 = Extremely relevant to why I did not take a public stance

The region's historical complexity

- 228 of 248 answered this question.
- “Not at all relevant” = 50.4%. Everyone else = 49.6%.
- This suggests that for about half of a large enough sample the human right to food and water – an indicator of the right to life itself – is not unconditional, and historical context *is* used to interpret this basic human right to varying degrees (cognitive dissonance).

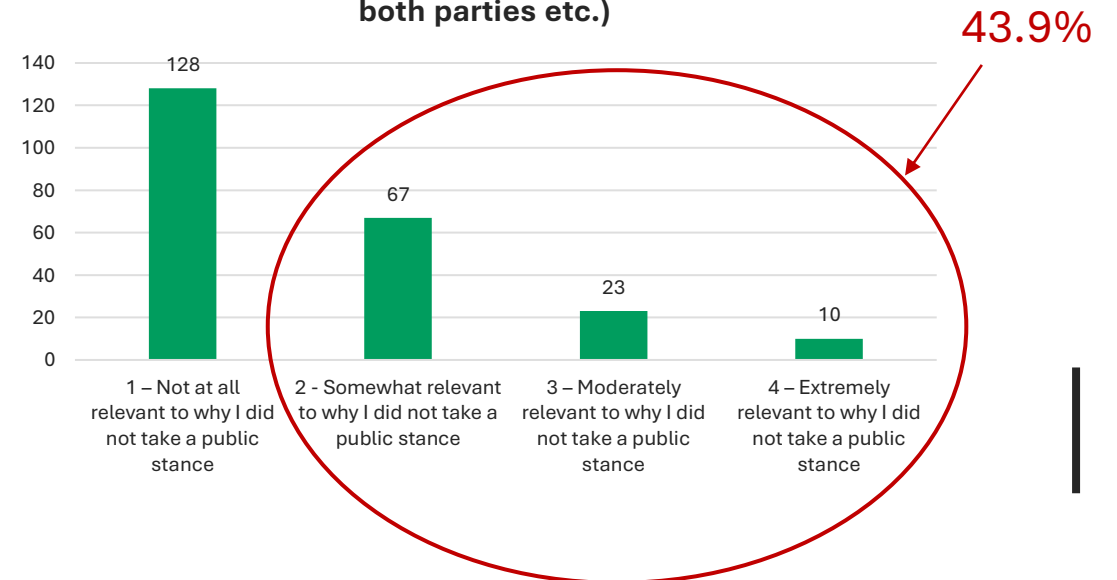
Fig 8. The history in the region is too complex for me to take a stance. Both sides have rights, and both sides have made mistakes.



Pressure to speak beyond human rights

- 228 of 248 answered this question.
- “Not at all relevant” = 56.1%. Everyone else = 43.9%.
- This suggests that respondents in this sample feel clear about their support for basic human rights, but simultaneous social pressure to speak beyond this.

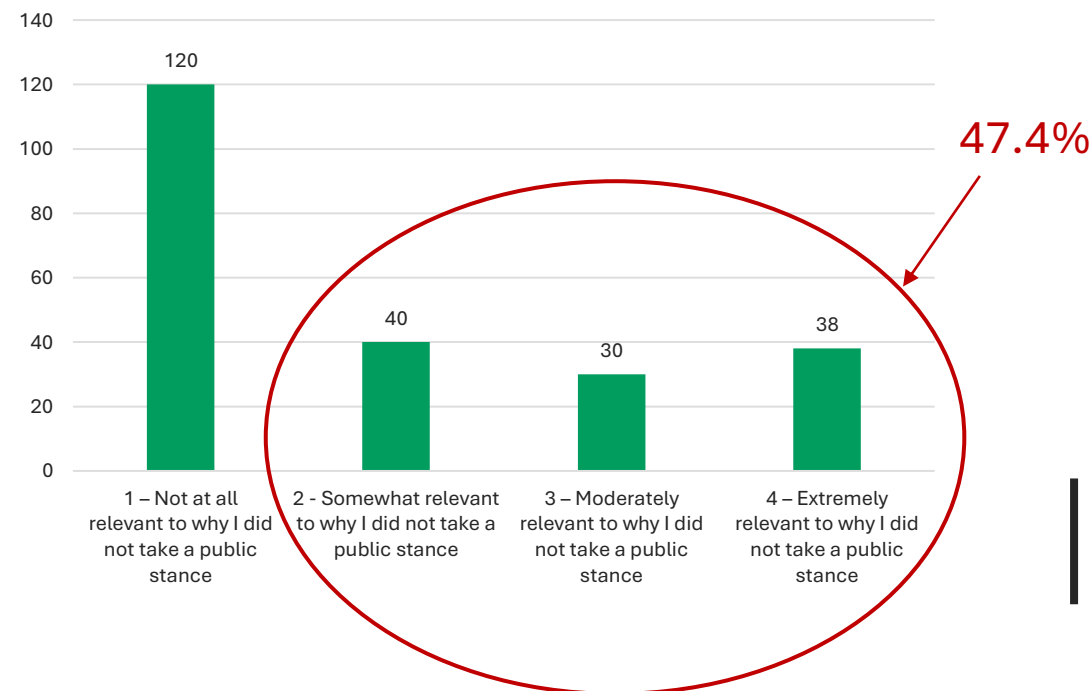
Fig 9. If I speak out about the human rights of Palestinians, I will need to also have views about related debates (arms exports, how to deal with extremists, self-determination and statehood for both parties etc.)



Generally not using social media for political issues

- 228 of 248 answered this question.
- “Not at all relevant” = 52.6%. Everyone else = 47.4%.
- This suggests:
 - this option was not relevant, i.e. they *do* use social media for political reasons, but this was not a barrier to them speaking up OR
 - this option was relevant, and the time spent reconsidering using social media for political issues is a barrier to speaking up that varies in relevance (from ‘somewhat’, ‘moderately’, to ‘extremely’).

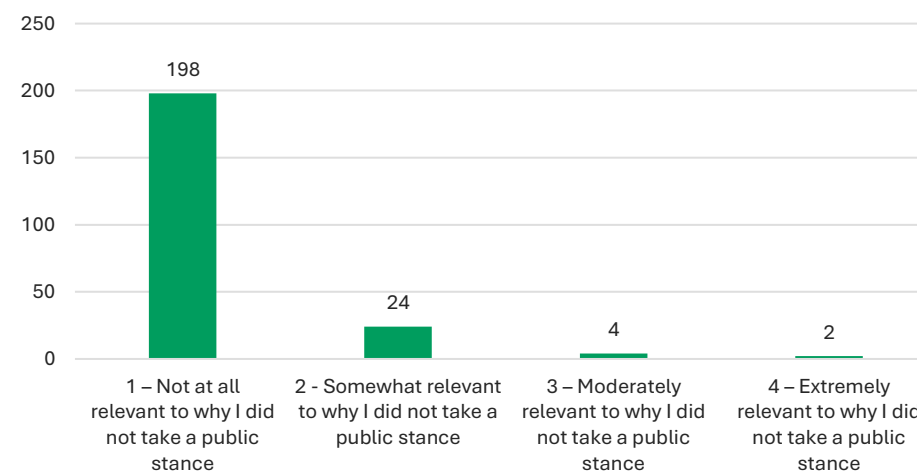
Fig 10. I don't use social media for political issues.



Confusion on whether Palestinian human rights have been infringed and by whom

- 228 of 248 answered this question.
- “Not at all relevant” = 86.8%.
- This suggests that very few are confused as to whether Palestinian human rights have been infringed and whether Israel is the cause of them.

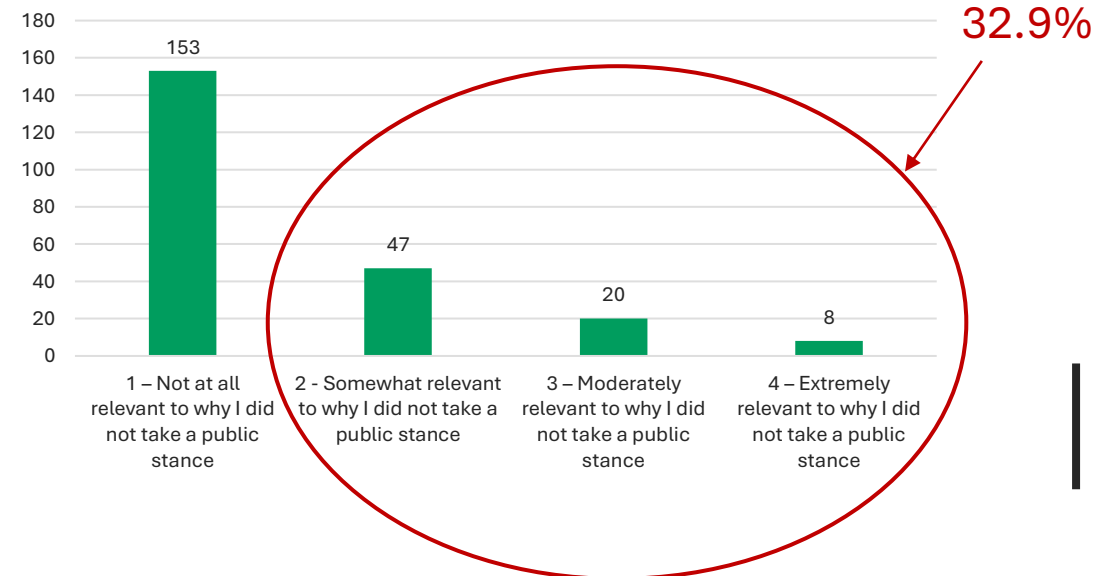
Fig 11. Some commentators say that Palestinians' human rights (such as the right to food and water) are not being infringed and if they are then, Israel isn't the cause. How can I know who to trust?



Pressure to speak about other atrocities

- 228 of 248 answered this question.
- “Not at all relevant” = 67.1%. Everyone else = 32.9%.
- This suggests that confidence to speak about one human rights issue may come from having a broader knowledge base of human rights more generally.

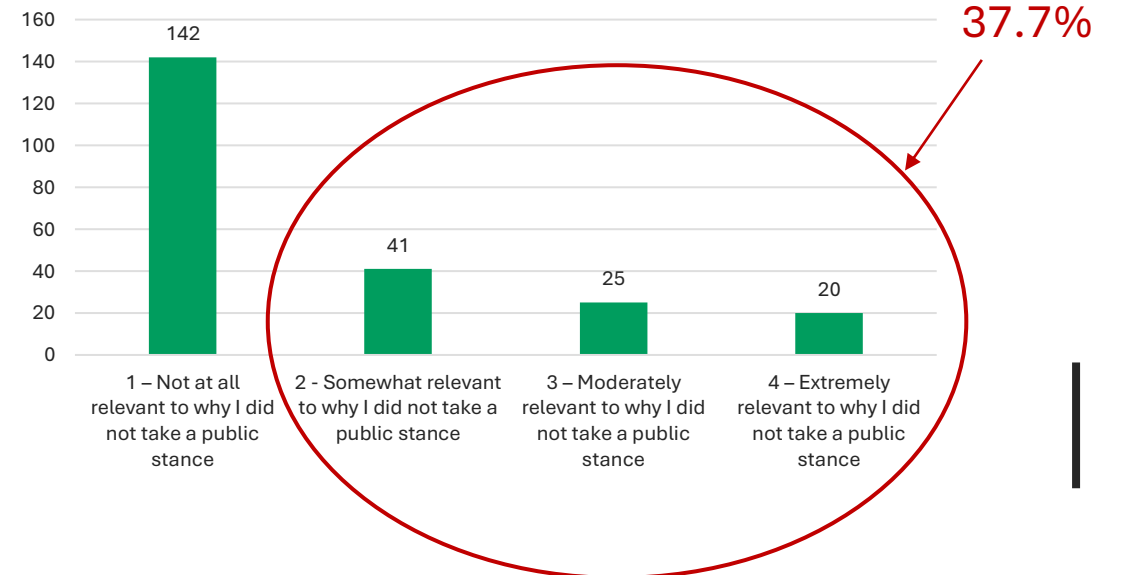
Fig 12. There are other countries where people don't have food and water and also where war crimes are happening. I can't take a stand on all of them.



Potential damaged professional relations

- 228 of 248 answered this question.
- “Not at all relevant” = 62.3%. Everyone else = 37.7%.
- This sizeable portion speaks to the real material impact that public solidarity can have, leaving individuals to seriously think about how they will manage this against their value for equal human rights.

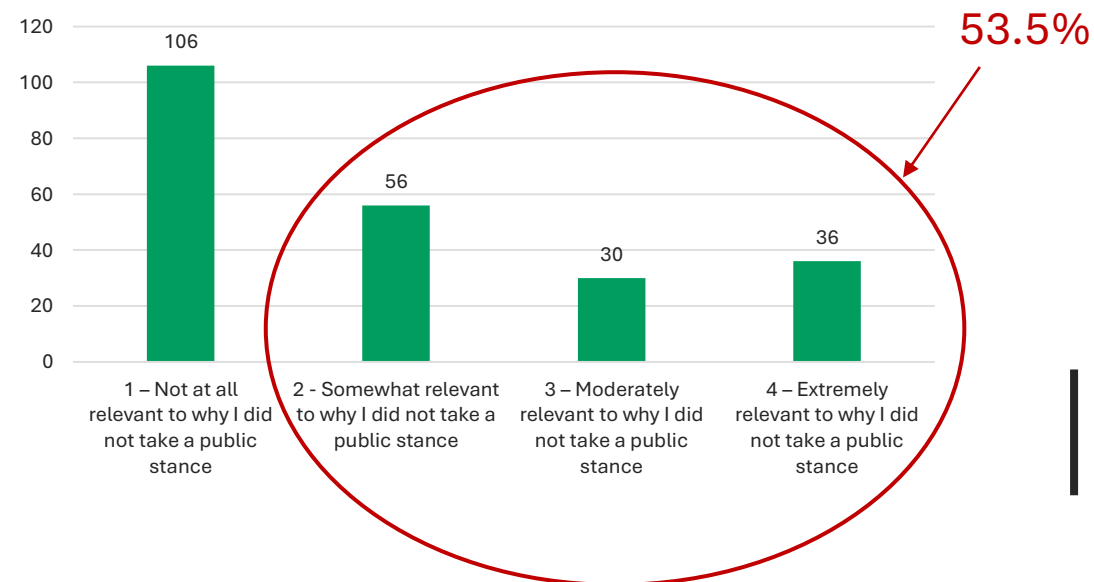
Fig 13. My main focus is on something else, and my relationships with clients, funders or stakeholders might be damaged if I comment about Palestinians human rights.



Being accused of being anti-Semitic or supporting terrorism

- 230 of 248 answered this question.
- “Not at all relevant” = 46.5%. Everyone else = 53.5%.
- This finding fits with polarising ‘either-or’ propaganda where people are forced to be seen as either pro-Palestine or pro-Israel and cannot support a position where both groups are seen to have the right to self-determination.

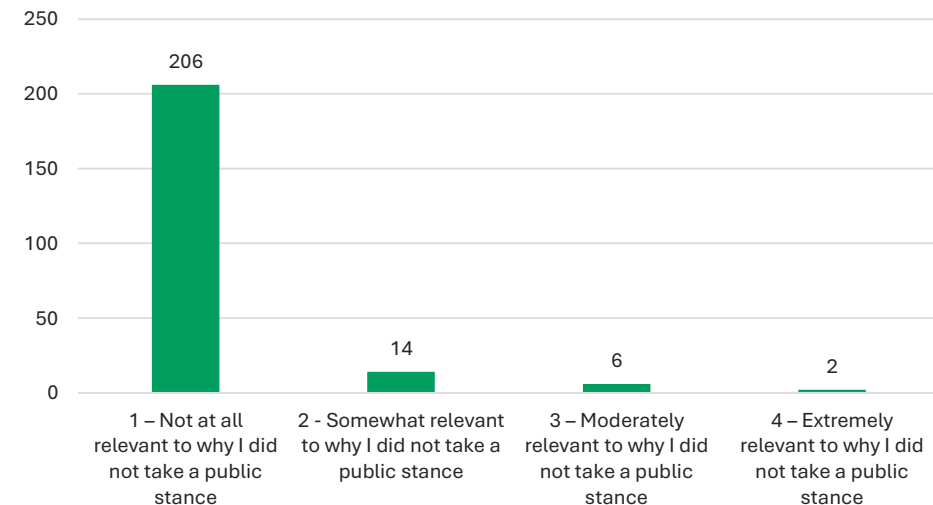
Fig 14. I could be accused of being anti-Semitic and or supporting terrorism. This could create career risk / social risk / legal risk / physical safety risk.



‘But Israel has the right to do anything to defend itself’

- 228 of 248 answered this question.
- “Not at all relevant” = 90.4%.
- This suggests that most of this sample knew early on that the reaction of Israel did not match the trauma caused by Hamas.

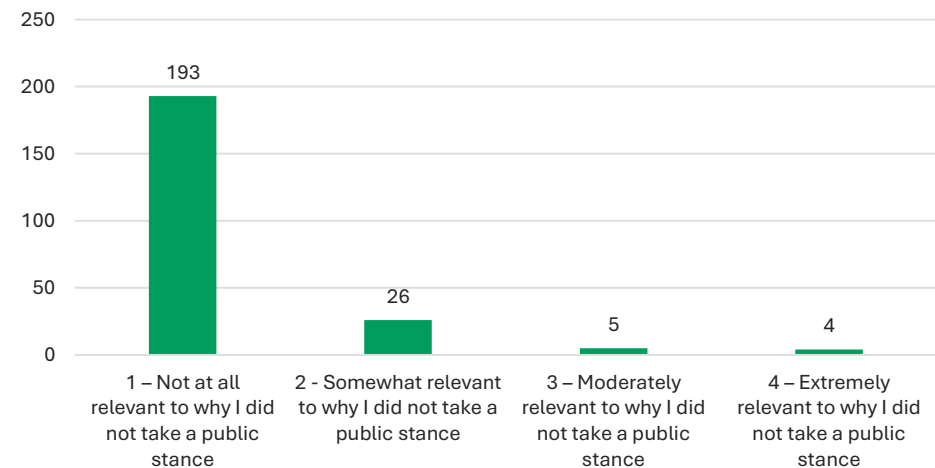
Fig 15. Given what Hamas did on October 7, 2023, Israel has the right to do anything it needs to defend itself.



Concern about impeding the release of Israeli hostages

- 228 of 248 answered this question.
- “Not at all relevant” = 84.6%.
- This suggests that most of this sample knew early on that the human rights of civilians are independent from the actions and negotiations of their governments.

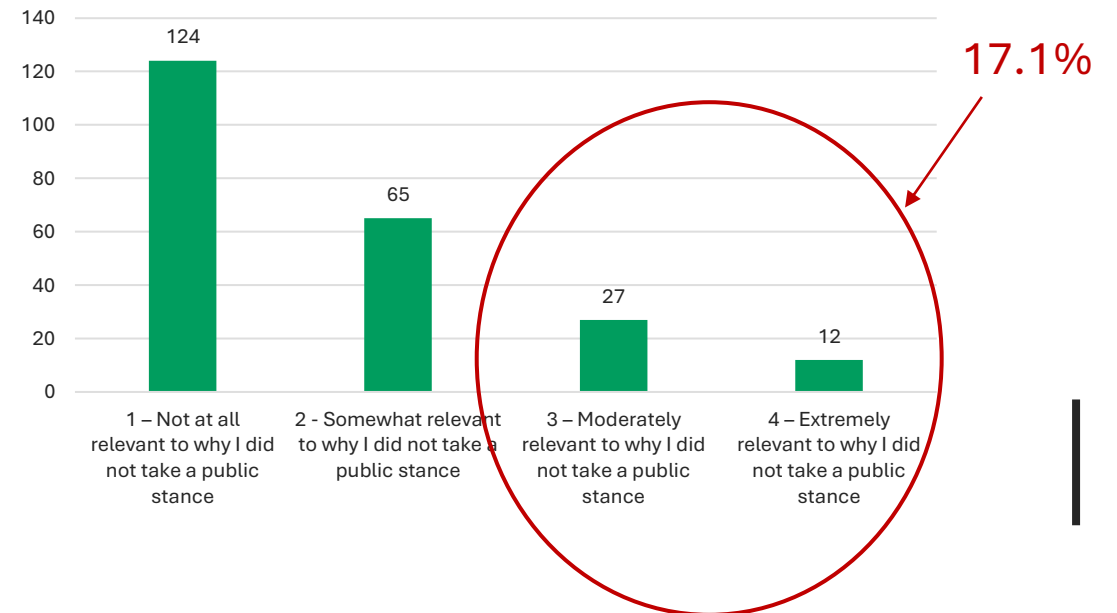
Fig 16. Unfortunately speaking out for Palestinian human rights during this conflict benefits Hamas and may encourage Hamas not to release the hostages.



Concern about whether individuals can truly make an impact

- 228 of 248 answered this question.
- “Not at all relevant” = 54.4%. “Somewhat relevant” = 28.5%. Others = 17.1%.
- This suggests that in this sample individuals’ sense of agency is relatively high.

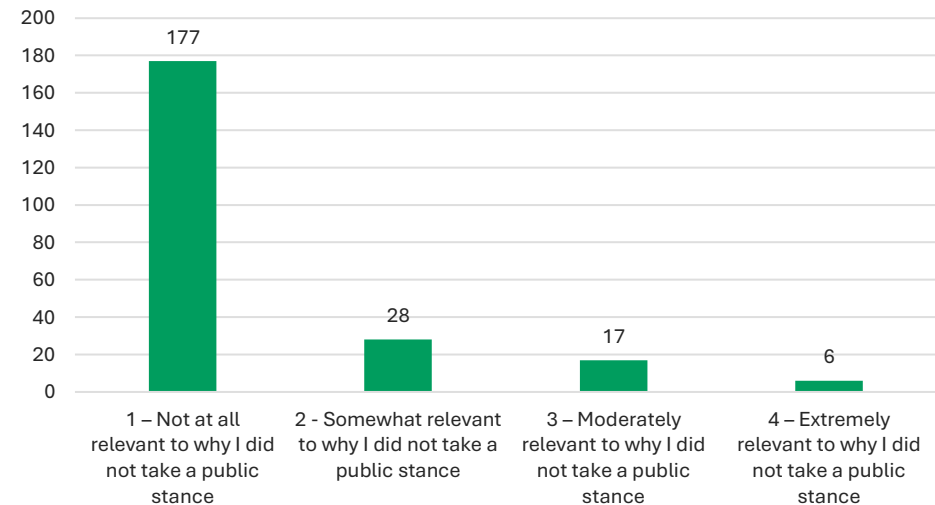
Fig 17. There’s no point in expressing my view because the real decisions are made by powerful vested interests at a much higher level.



Concern about encouraging real anti-Semitism

- 228 of 248 answered this question.
- “Not at all relevant” = 77.6%.
- This suggests that respondents may not know others who are anti-Semitic or understand that the expression of their views are independent from those of others.

Fig 18. If I speak out about Palestinian human rights, it might encourage those who are anti-Semitic.



Freeform responses

Barriers to speaking up

- *“Please list other reasons that stopped you from taking a public stance on the infringement of Palestinian human rights (such as the right to food and water).” (n = 173).*

Enablers of speaking up

- *“What do you think compelled you to do so?” (n = 216).*
- *“Who or what helped you speak up for Palestinian human rights?” (n = 209).*
- *“Thinking about the biggest obstacles you face in speaking out, what would most help you overcome them?” (n = 8).*



Summary of key findings

- For a sizeable portion, there were no barriers to speaking up. For the remainder, lack of knowledge was a key barrier.
- Unequal and skewed media coverage and government responses impact knowledge acquisition, and therefore public shows of support. In some locations, these are related to historical guilt.
- Some expressed shock at the lack of interest, others speak only as required, and the increasing scale of destruction has been important for how people are making sense of the situation.
- Even after people gain knowledge, social and professional risks for speaking up need to be considered, along with managing time and energy for other causes.



Summary of key findings (cont'd)

- Some feel it is not their place to speak since they are not from the region, others may be subject to surveillance in their country, and others again are conscious of being seen to have a biased view because of their own experiences of racism.
- For most, the emotional impact has been huge and needed to be balanced against what they saw as effectual action.
- Research into how to support the mental health needs of Jewish civilians against the actions of the Israeli military and/or their government (e.g. British, US, Canadian) is important.
- The ways people transform their agency and/or helplessness into empowering strategies that can make an impact are wide and varied.

Summary of key findings (cont'd)

- Anonymity helps people speak out.
- A key reason people spoke up was the sheer and horrific scale of injustice and hypocrisy – it violated their value for humanity, belief in human rights, was against their ethnic culture/faith, and caused moral outrage.
- Social media, connection to (people from) the region, and gains in knowledge from the news/experts also helped them speak up.
- Some are heart-led and others mind-led, and some have re-scripted their relationship with work.



Apologies for being cliché, but "the horror" is what compelled me to do so.

Getting educated about Palestinians struggles, and get together with likeminded people well read about the issue.

Enablers

Barriers

MORAL OUTRAGE
Scale and horror of injustice, hypocrisy, and violation of human rights

GAINS IN ACTION-PROMOTING KNOWLEDGE
Amount of and confidence in information/education

FEELING INADEQUATELY INFORMED
'I don't understand the full history'

POTENTIAL RISK
'What damage will speaking up do to my work and friends?'

FEELING INEFFECTUAL
'Does my voice have any real impact against powerful institutions?'

I believe everyone has a right to basic human necessities, however the conflict had confused me in the beginning.

My audience is primarily American, and challenging the pro-zionist narrative prior to Oct. 7 was regarded as career suicide.

The pain of thinking about it is harming me, combined with thinking my stance won't make a difference.



More information

“Realizing that by not speaking up I was part of the problem” – Survey respondent.

- www.bystandersnomore.com
- Read the Full Report
- Complete the survey yourself
- Find additional resources – videos, articles, ways to help, etc.

Thank you for listening!

