Yair Amitai

Contact Information

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Appointments

University of Toronto
Postdoctoral Fellow, The Policy, Elections, and Representation Lab 2026

Education

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem
Ph.D. in Political Science, with Distinction 2025

Dissertation: "Polarized Politics: Party Dynamics, Affective Divides, and Electoral Behavior in Modern Democracies"

* Received the Bernard M. Bloomfield Prize for Outstanding Doctoral Dissertation
* Advanced Graduate Studies Program (AGSP) ("Telem")

M.A. Political Science 2017

* Advanced Graduate Studies Program (AGSP) ("Telem")
* *Best thesis award*, the Israeli Political Science Association, 2018

B.A. Political Science and History (Cum Laude) 2015

Publications

Asif Efrat, Yair Amitai, and Amnon Cavari. "Democratic Backsliding Fuels a Democratic Spring: Executive Power Grab and Support for Democracy", Government and Opposition, accepted.

Orit Kedar, Yair Amitai, and Gilad Horowitz. "Disproportionality in Geographic Representation", BJPS, 56(e43), pp. 1-22.

Yair Amitai and Omer Yair (2025). Polarization is Dangerous, but its effect is not Deterministic. ICON-S Israel.

Yair Amitai, Noam Gidron, and Omer Yair (2025). Affective Polarization in Israel, 1992-2022. In Michal Shamir, Gidon Rahat, and Noam Gidron (eds.), "The Elections in Israel 2022". Routledge.

Yair Amitai and Raanan Sulitzeanu-Kenan (2024). Blame Avoidance in Polarized Societies. In Matthew Flinders, Gergana Dimova, Markus Hinterleitner, R. A. W. Rhodes, and Kent Weaver (eds.), "The Politics and Governance of Blame". Oxford University Press.

Yair Amitai (2023). "The Activists Who Divide Us: A Cross-Country Analysis of Party Activists' Influence on Polarization and Representation". Comparative Political Studies, 57(3), pp. 453-485.

Under Review

Luca Bernardi, Yair Amitai, and James Adams. "The Short and Long Term Effects of Affective Polarization on Subjective Well-Being".

Yair Amitai, Amnon Cavari, and Asif Eftar. "Ideological Constraint Under Catastrophic Shock: Evidence from the October 7, 2023 Hamas Attack and the following war in Gaza".

Omer Yair, Yair Amitai, Noam Gidron, Amnon Cavari, and Asif Eftar. "The persistence of affective polarization in times of security threats: Evidence from post-October 7 Israel".

Yair Amitai. "The Reciprocal Relationship Between Voter Affective Polarization and Elite Ideological Polarization".

Work in Progress

Asif Efrat, Yair Amitai, Amnon Cavari, Sivan Hirsch-Hoefler, and Gilad Hirschberger. "Different Threats, Different Reactions: Public Responses to Israel's Judicial Overhaul and the October 7 Attack".

Amnon Cavari, Asif Efrat and Yair Amitai. "International influences on Public Opinion in Democratic Backsliding".

Yair Amitai, Amnon Cavari and Asif Efrat. "Two Shocks, Different Consequences: The Ideological and Affective Impact of the Judicial Overhaul and October 7 on Public Opinion in Israel".

Yair Amitai. "Caught in the Middle: Voters Who Face Cross-Pressures Between Their Ideological and Affective Preferences".

Conference and Presentations

Midwest Political Science Association (MPSA)	2022, 2023, 2024, 2025
European Political Science Association (EPSA)	2024, 2025
European Consortium for Political Research (ECPR)	2018, 2024, 2025
Affectvie Polarization Workshop	2022, 2025

Awards and Fellowships

The Bernard M. Bloomfield Prize for Outstanding Doctoral Dissertation

Jacques Nass Prize for Best Work in Political Economy, The Department of Political Science, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Glick Prize for Best Work on Israeli Democracy, The Department of Political Science, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Best thesis award, the Israeli Political Science Association

The Yitzhak Rabin Foundation Fellowship in Postgraduate Democracy Studies Scholarship

Advanced Graduate Studies Program (AGSP) ("Telem") Scholarship.

Teaching **The Department of Political Science, Hebrew University of Jerusalem**

Political Economy (TA)

Electoral Politics: Voters, and Party Systems (TA)

Comparative Politics: Institutions and Processes (TA)

Historical Introduction to Contemporary Politics (TA)

Introduction to Political Science (TA)

Software R, Stata

Languages Hebrew (Native), English (Fluent)