

**THE PERCEPTIONS OF THE RULE OF LAW AMONG  
IMMIGRANTS FROM THE FORMER SOVIET UNION TO ISRAEL:  
DOES AGE MATTER?**

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## ABSTRACT

*A growing body of research, both in Israel and abroad, explores the public trust accorded to the legal institutions and authorities, as well as attitudes towards the rule of law. However, this research is often over-generalizing, because it overemphasizes the similarity of the opinions held by the representatives of a certain group and ignores possible generational differences. Drawing on the data collected in the course of nine focus group interviews with the representatives of three segments of the Israeli society: the immigrants of the 90's from the former Soviet Union (FSU), the secular veterans and the modern orthodox veterans, this pilot study considers the difference in the perceptions and the attitudes towards the rule of law in Israel, based on the respondents' age group (20-29, 30-39 and 40-60.) The analysis compared the attitudes demonstrated by the respondents of the groups using a double cross-analysis: (a) vertical—the perceptions of the representatives of different ages of the same population segment—and (b) horizontal—the perceptions of the representatives of the same age, but of different segments of the population.*

*Due to the small size of the sample (6-10 respondents in each focus group,) the results of this study may not be widely generalizable. Nevertheless, the findings suggest that the age variable plays a significant role in the disparate perceptions of the rule of law among Israeli immigrants. This conclusion is based on the fact that the perceptions of the representatives of different ages of this segment significantly diverge: the greatest difference between the perceptions of the representatives of different generations was found to be between those of the younger and the elder generation of the FSU immigrants; whereas these generations of the religious respondents were the closest in their opinions. As to the representatives of all the focus groups, the findings indicate that the respondents' commitment to the laws is based on the nature of their beliefs and the compatibility between them and the laws.*