



**Attitudes Toward Jews and
the Middle East in
Six European Countries**

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Methodology

- **First International Resources was commissioned by the Anti-Defamation League to research attitudes and opinions toward Jews and the Middle East in six European countries.**
- **Our research focused on the attitudes of the general public in Austria, Belgium, Hungary, the Netherlands, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.**
- **Data results for each individual country were weighted based on age and gender. The completed interview data underwent minor weighting to national population data using official government information on age and gender.**
- **In addition to the individual country results, we have compiled overall statistics which take into account the findings from the six countries surveyed as a whole. These figures are combined results from our surveys, with each country's findings being weighted equally as one-sixth of the whole.**
- **Fieldwork was done by Taylor Nelson Sofres (TNS), which conducted a total of 3,000 telephone interviews -- 500 in each of the six countries -- among the general public between May 29 – June 18, 2007.**
- **Interviews were conducted in the native language of each of the countries and were completed by TNS.**
- **The margin of error for each country is +/- 4.5% at 95% level of confidence.**

Anti-Semitism in Europe

As with previous surveys, data from this latest 2007 European tracking poll indicates that significant percentages of European respondents continue to believe in some of the most pernicious anti-Semitic stereotypes.

Respondents across the continent were asked whether or not they thought the following four statements were “probably true” or “probably false.”

- 1) Jews are more loyal to Israel than to this country.
- 2) Jews have too much power in the business world.
- 3) Jews have too much power in international financial markets.
- 4) Jews still talk too much about what happened to them in the Holocaust.

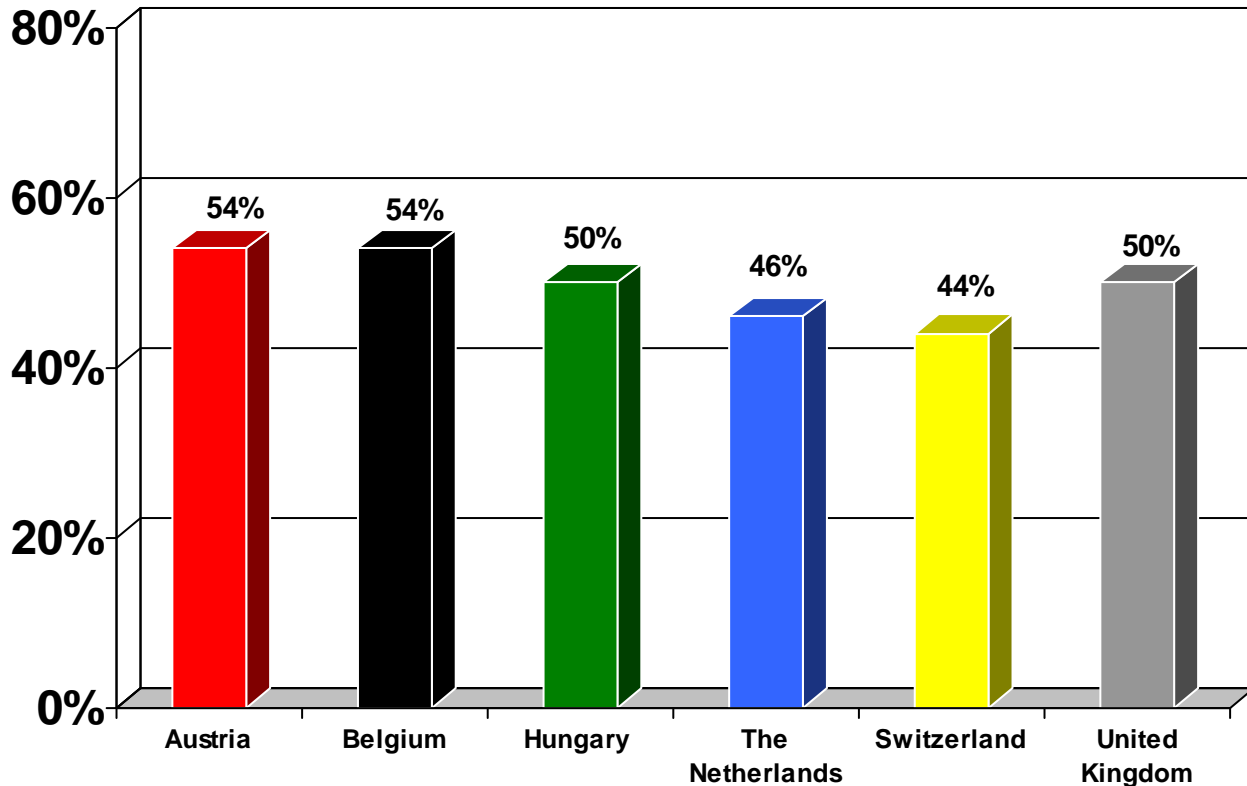
Respondents were also asked:

- ❖ Whether they agree or disagree with the statement that “Jews are responsible for the death of Christ.”

Finally, respondents were asked if their opinion of Jews was influenced by actions taken by the State of Israel and whether they believed the violence directed against European Jews was a result of anti-Jewish feelings or anti-Israel sentiment.

(1) Jews are more loyal to Israel than to this country.

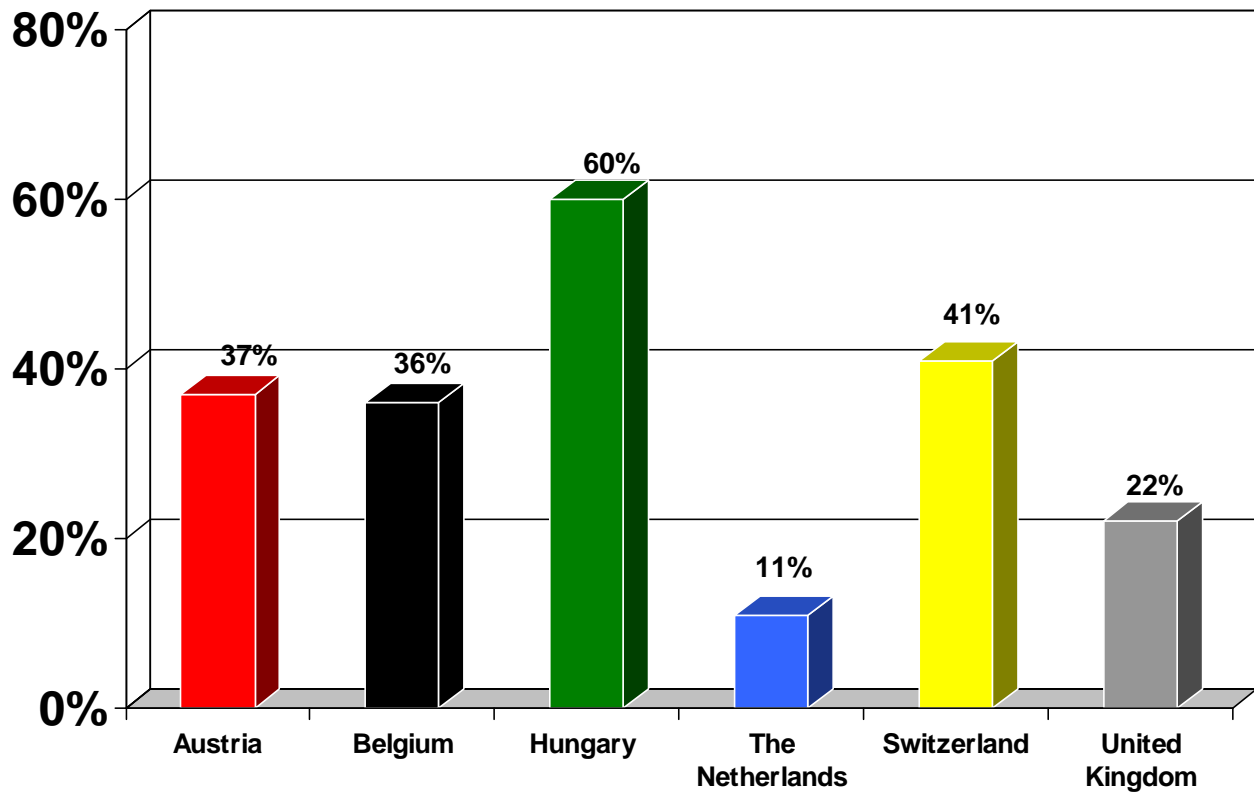
Percent responding “probably true”



- The data indicate that Europeans continue to question the loyalty of their Jewish citizens.
- Overall, half of those surveyed in the six countries believe that Jews are more loyal to Israel than to their own country.
- A majority of respondents in Austria, Belgium, Hungary and the United Kingdom believe that this statement is “probably true.”

(2) Jews have too much power in the business world.

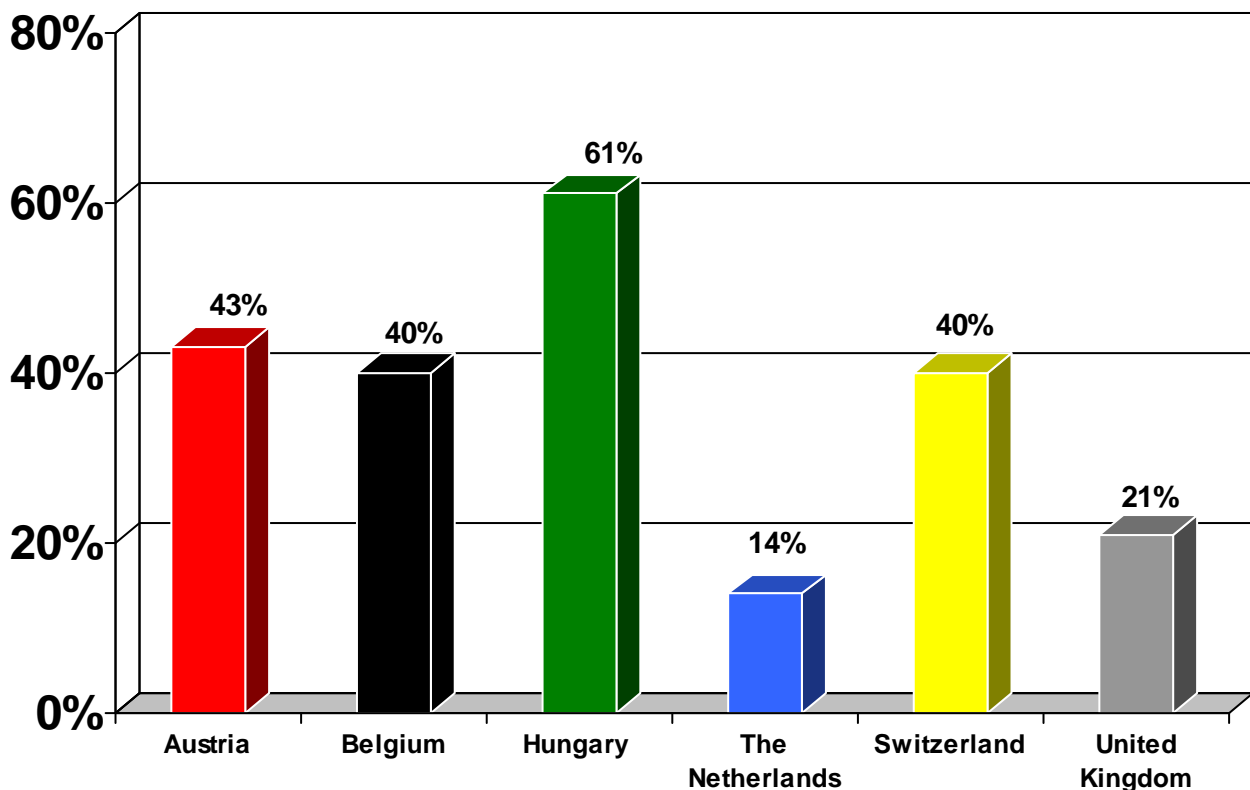
Percent responding “probably true”



- High levels of those surveyed across Europe still believe in the traditional anti-Jewish canard that “Jews have too much power in the business world.”
- Overall, 35 percent of all respondents believe this stereotype to be true.
- More than half of Hungarian respondents, 60 percent, believe that “Jews have too much power in the business world.”

(3) Jews have too much power in international financial markets.

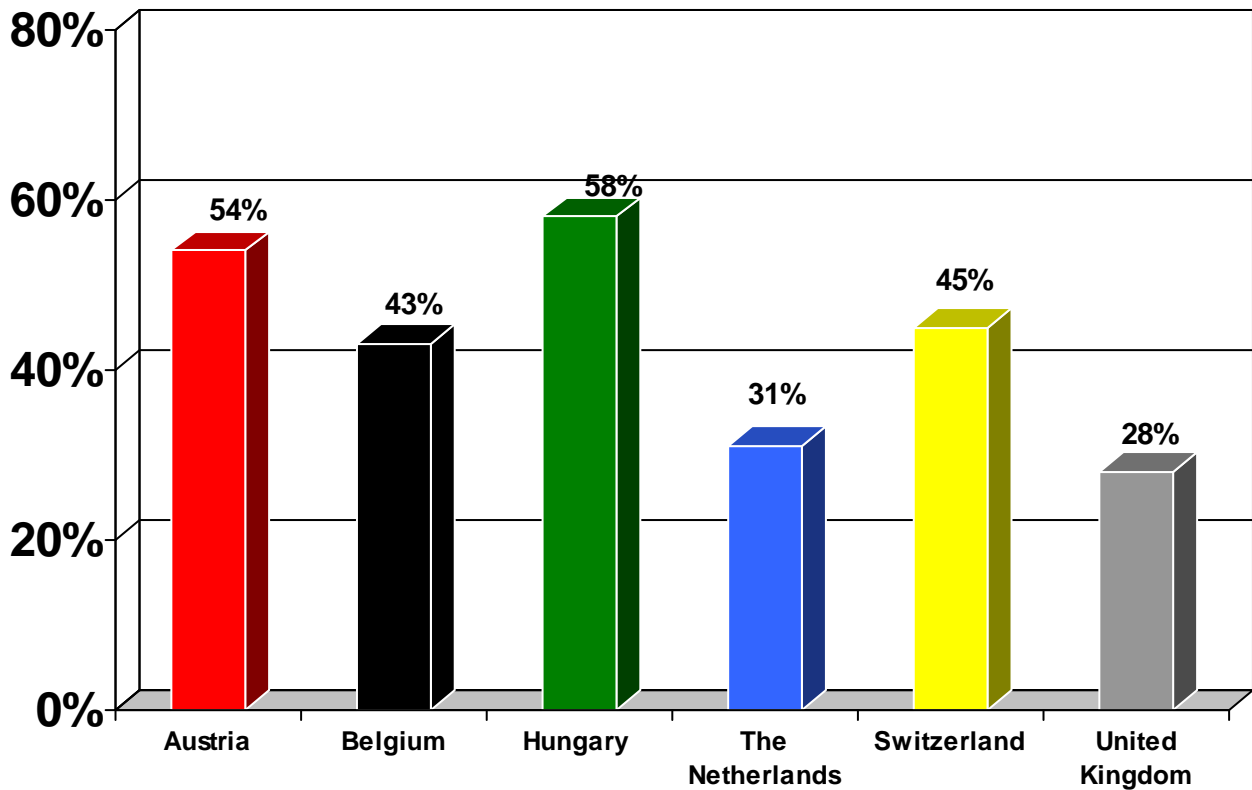
Percent responding “probably true”



- **Similarly, respondents in the six countries still adhere to the notion that “Jews have too much power in international financial markets.”**
- **Overall, 36 percent of those surveyed cling to the traditional stereotype that Jews exert too much influence over international financial markets.**
- **A majority of Hungarian respondents believe the above statement to be “probably true.”**

(4) Jews still talk too much about what happened to them in the Holocaust.

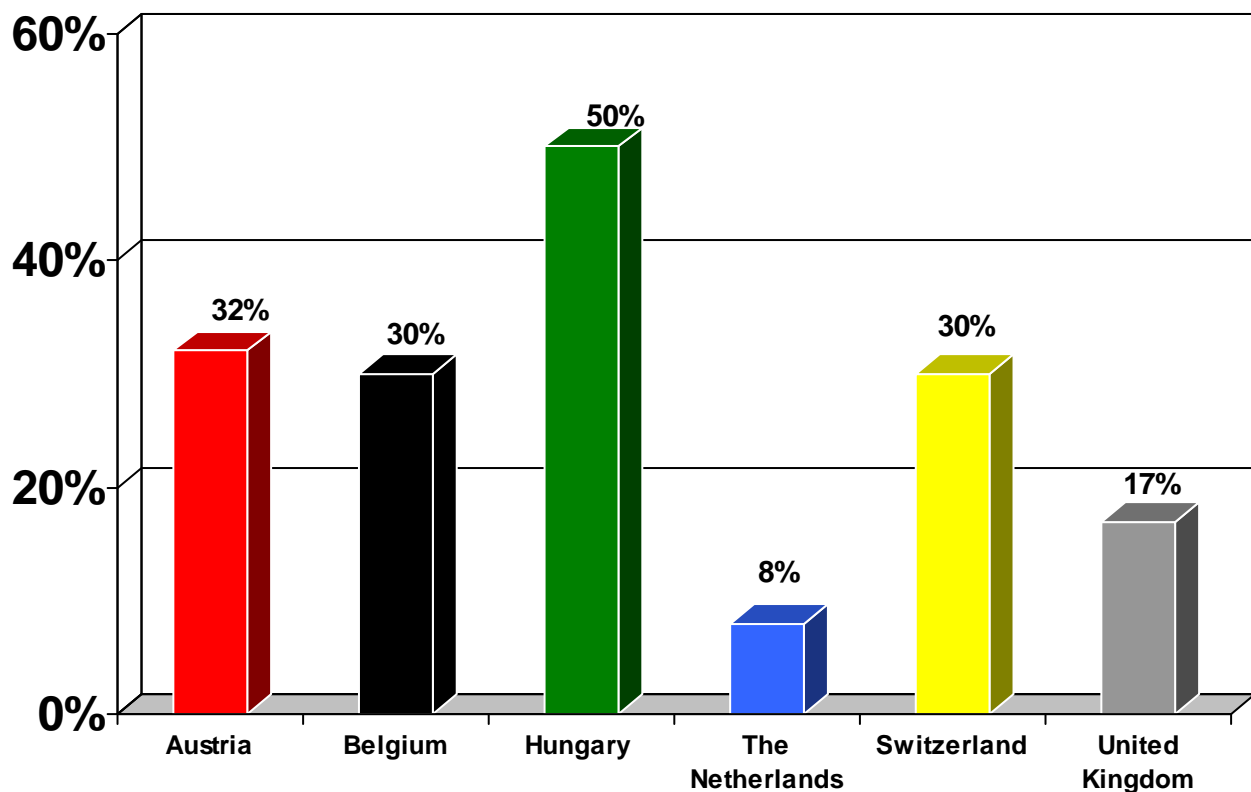
Percent responding “probably true”



- Large portions of respondents believe that Jews still talk too much about what happened to them in the Holocaust.
- Overall, 44 percent of those surveyed believe it is “probably true” that Jews still talk too much about the Holocaust.

The following chart illustrates the percentage of those surveyed in each country who answered “probably true” to at least 3 of the following traditional anti-Semitic stereotypes:

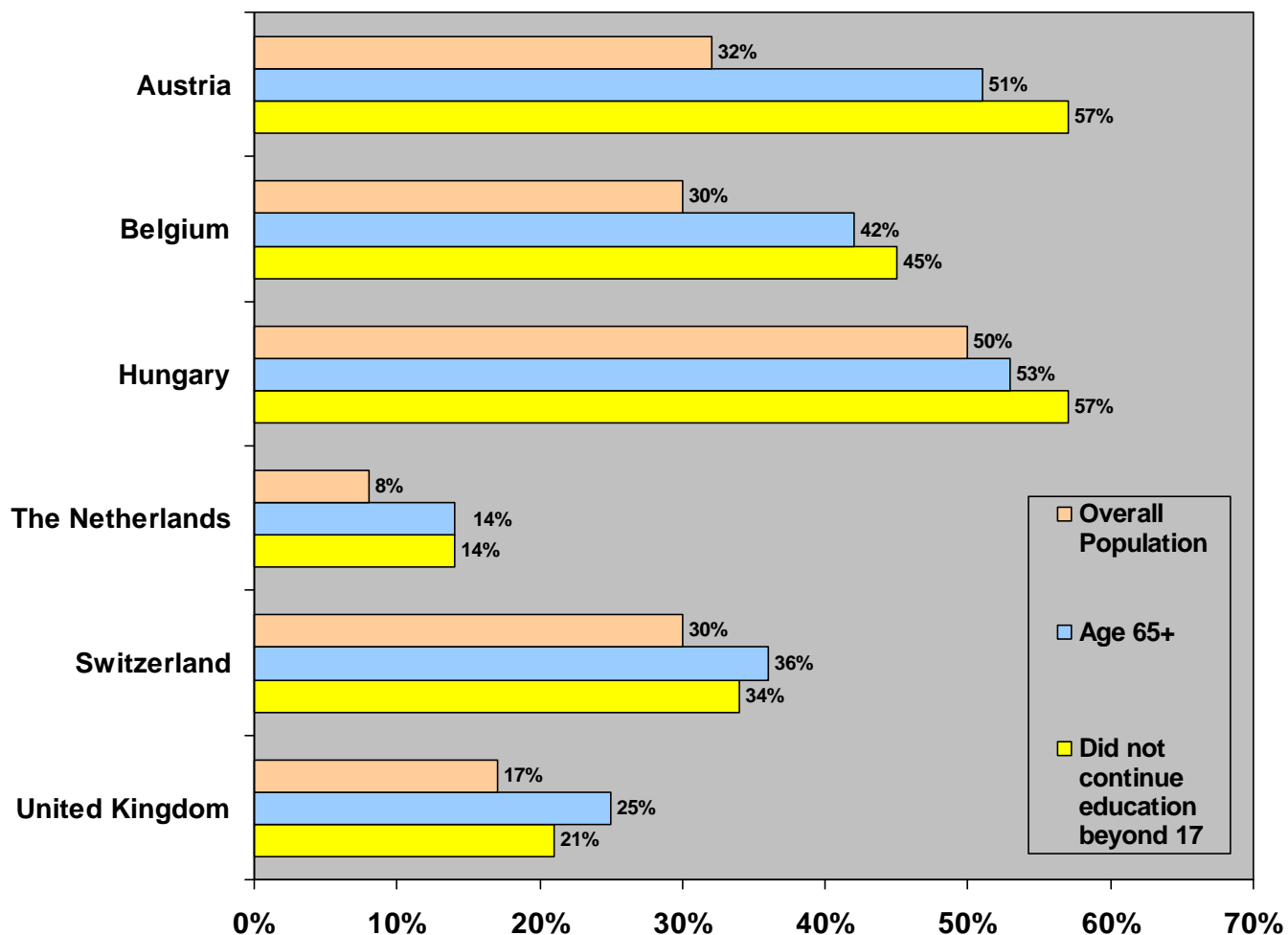
- 1) Jews are more loyal to Israel than to this country.
- 2) Jews have too much power in the business world.
- 3) Jews have too much power in international financial markets.
- 4) Jews still talk too much about what happened to them in the Holocaust



- Overall, 28 percent of those surveyed believe that at least three of the above statements are “probably true.”
- In fact, 21 percent of Hungarian respondents and 17 percent of Austrian respondents believe that all four of the statements are “probably true.”

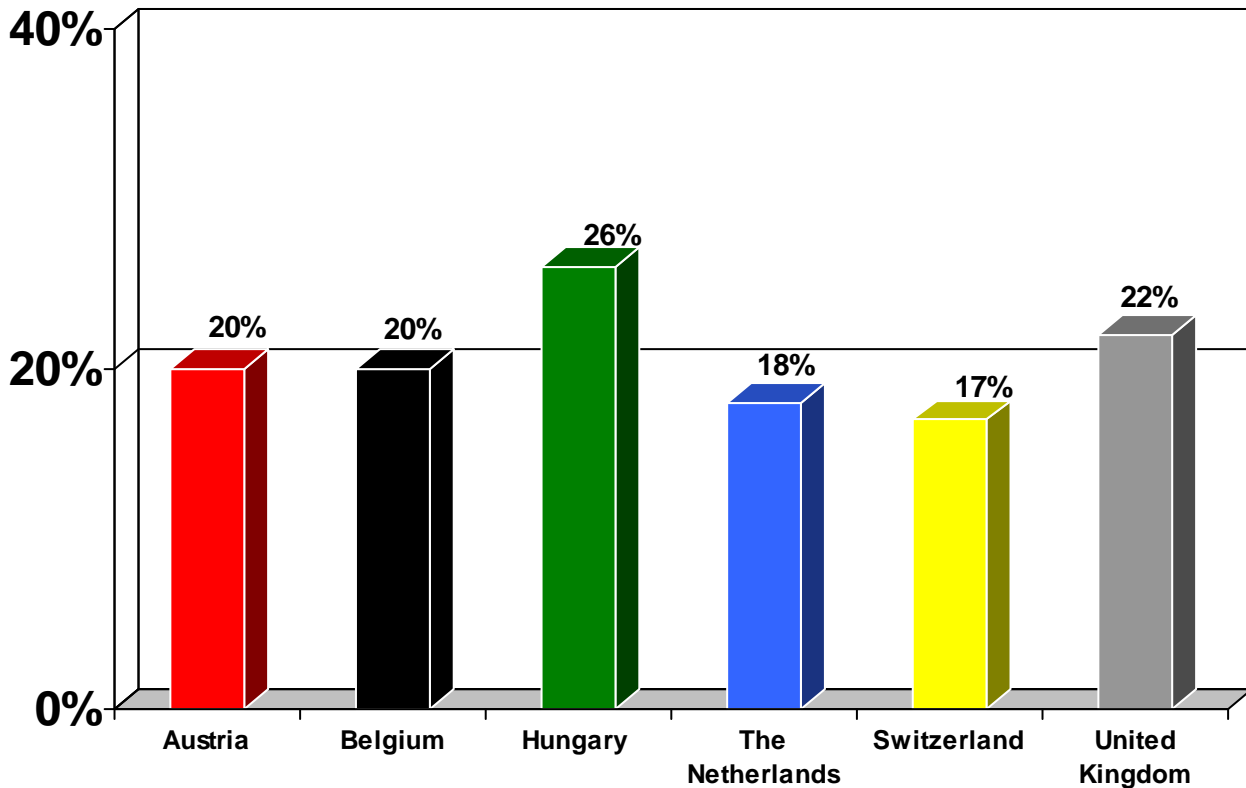
- Moreover, the data indicate that age and education are key factors in determining the likelihood of a respondent believing in the traditional anti-Semitic stereotypes.
- Those over the age of 65 and those who did not continue their education beyond the age of 17, are more likely than the rest of the population to agree with at least three of the four anti-Semitic characterizations presented in the survey.
- The following table illustrates this trend in the six countries surveyed.

Percentage responding “probably true” to at least three of the four anti-Semitic stereotypes tested



(5) The Jews are responsible for the death of Christ.

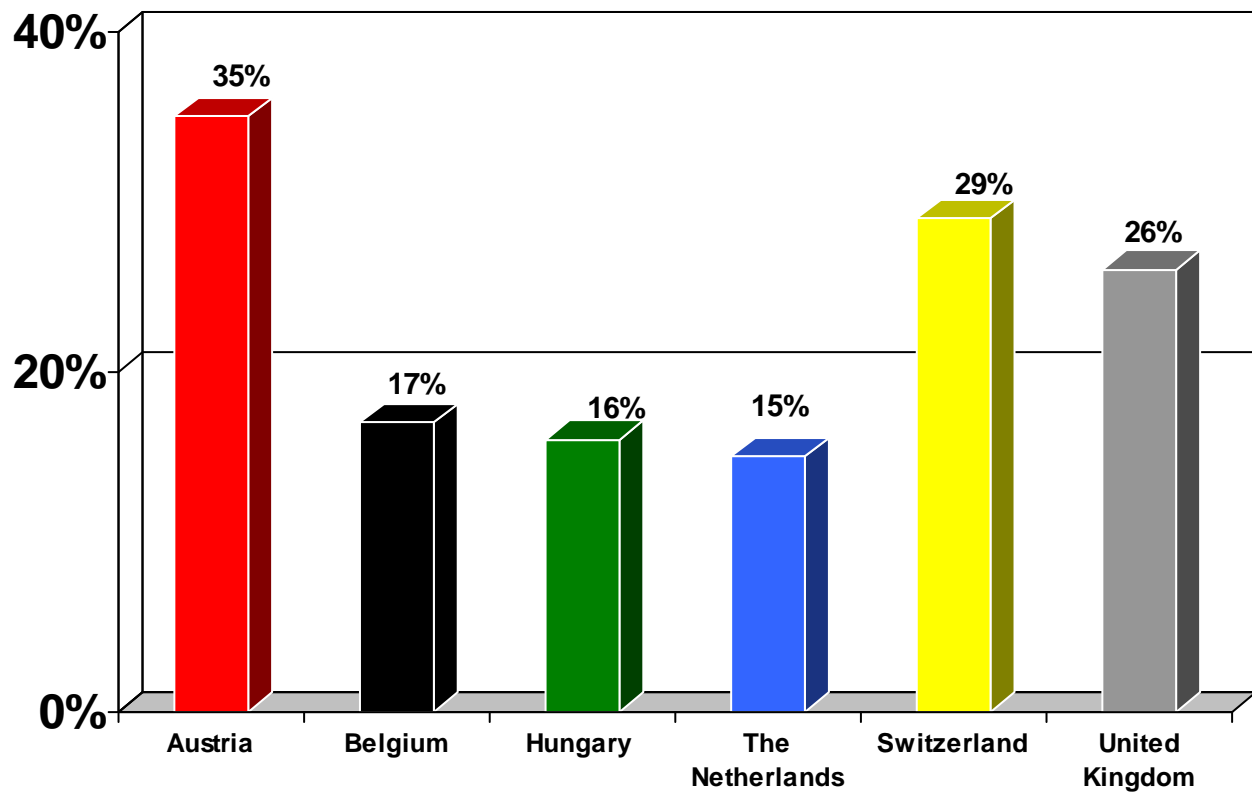
Percent responding “strongly agree” + “somewhat agree”



- A significant percentage of those surveyed continue to blame Jews for the death of Christ.
- Overall, 20 percent agree with the statement that “Jews are responsible for the death of Christ.”
- More than a quarter of Hungarian respondents, 26 percent, agree with this statement -- the highest percentage of all the countries surveyed.

(6a) Is your opinion of Jews influenced by actions taken by the State of Israel?

Percent responding “yes”

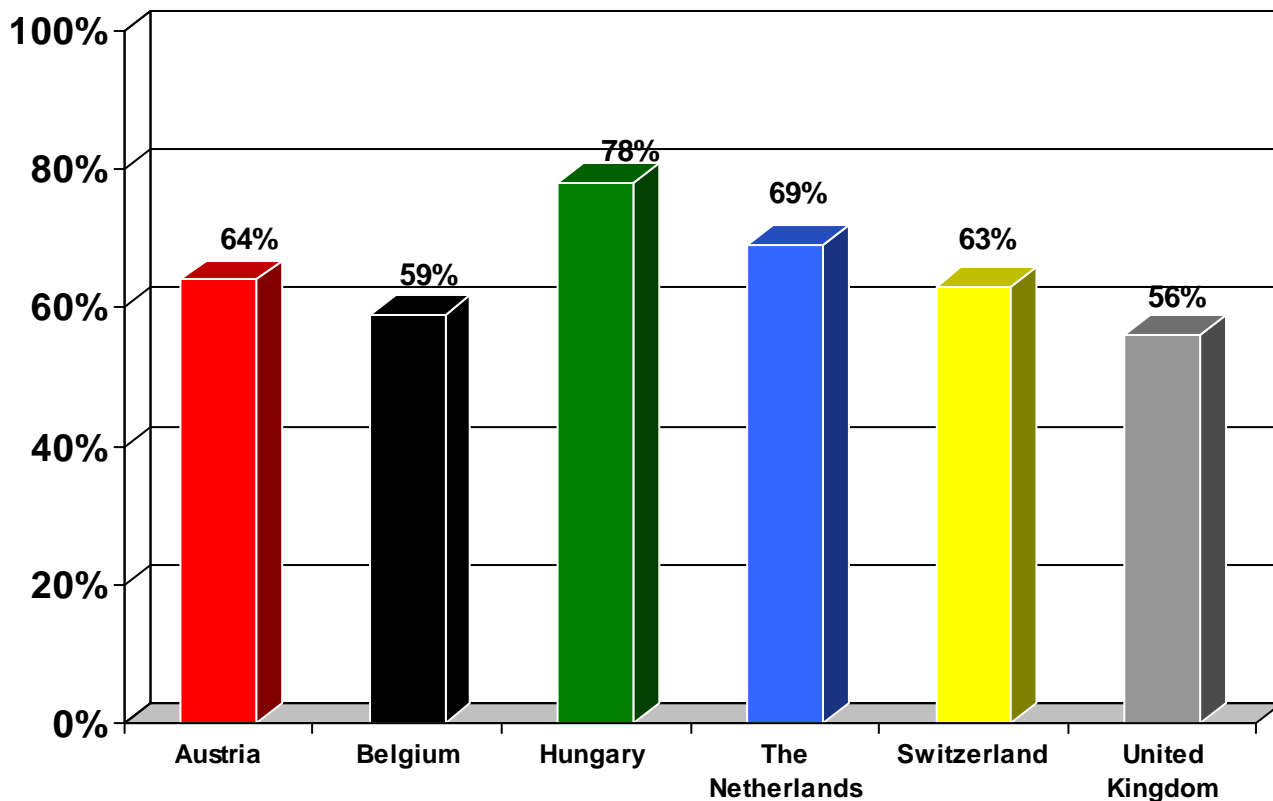


- Overall, 23 percent of those surveyed say that their opinion of Jews is influenced by the actions taken by the State of Israel.

Respondents who answered “yes” in question 6a were then asked the following questions:

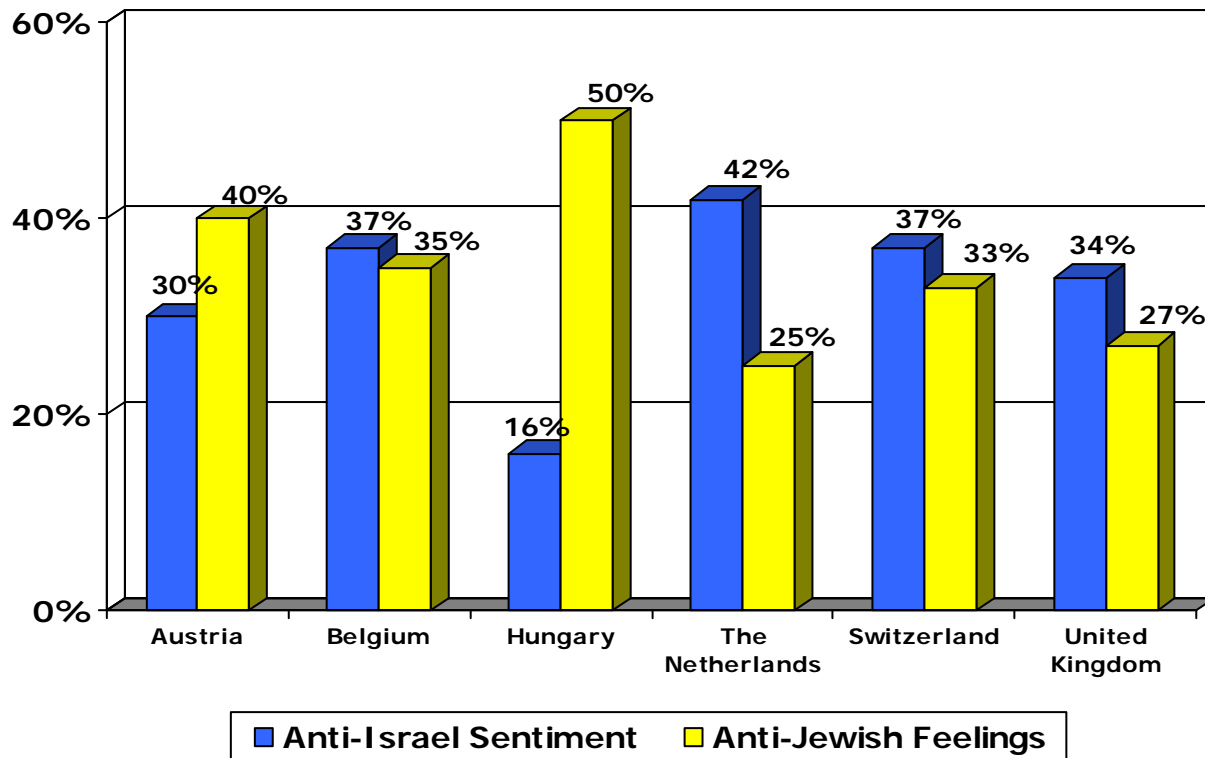
(6b) Is your opinion of Jews better or worse?

Percent responding “worse”



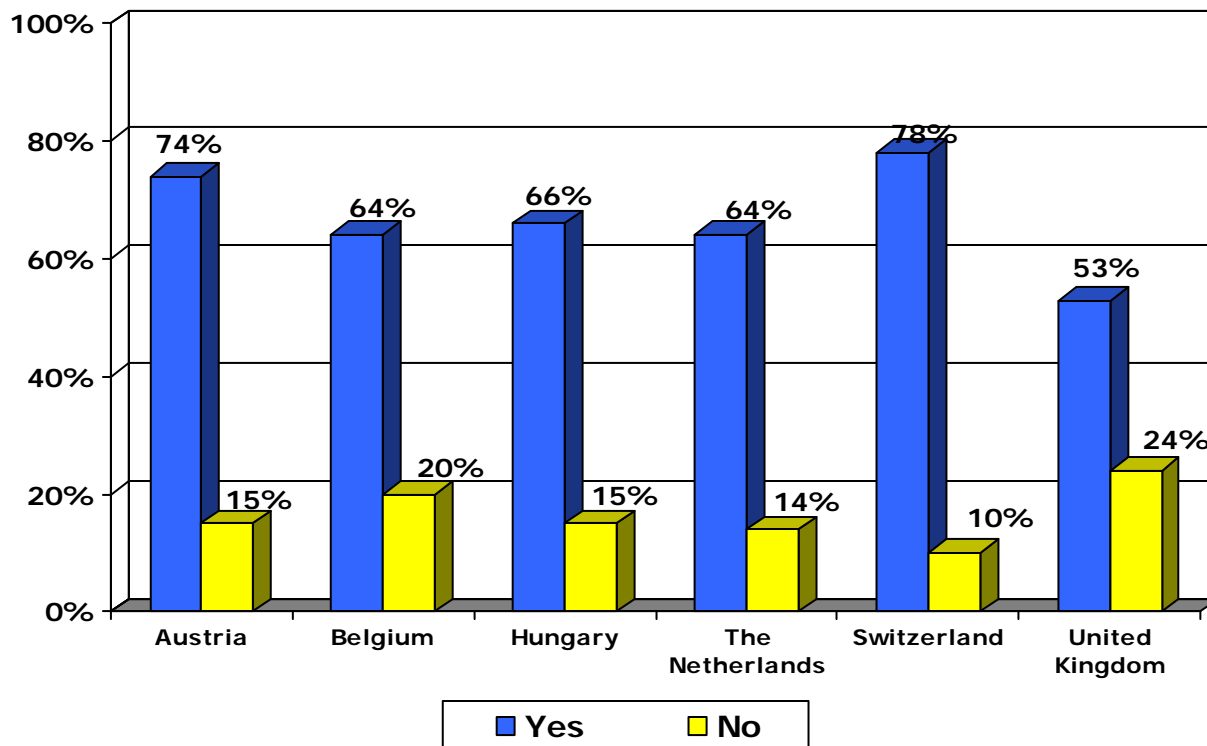
- Overall, of those respondents whose opinions are influenced, nearly two-thirds, 64 percent, say that their opinion of Jews is worse as a result of the actions taken by Israel.
- Respondents in Hungary (78 percent) and the Netherlands (69 percent) are most likely to view Jews more negatively as a result of actions taken by the State of Israel.

(7) In your opinion, is the violence directed against Jews in (insert individual country name) a result of anti-Jewish feelings or a result of anti-Israel sentiment?



- Overall, 35 percent of those surveyed believe that the violence directed against Jews is a result of anti-Jewish feelings, while 33 percent believe it is a result of anti-Israel sentiment.
- Hungarian respondents are most likely to believe that anti-Jewish sentiment is the reason behind the violence directed against Hungarian Jews.
- Hungary and Austria were also the only two countries where more respondents cited anti-Jewish sentiment as opposed to anti-Israel feelings as the main cause of the violence directed against Jews in those countries.

8) Do you think your government is doing enough to ensure the safety and security of its Jewish citizens?



- Overall, more than two-thirds of those surveyed, 67 percent, believe that their government is doing enough to ensure the safety and security of its Jewish citizens.
- Swiss and Austrian respondents are most likely to think that their government is providing enough protection for its Jewish citizens.
- Nearly a quarter of respondents in the U.K., 24 percent, do not believe that their government is doing enough to ensure the safety of the country's Jews.

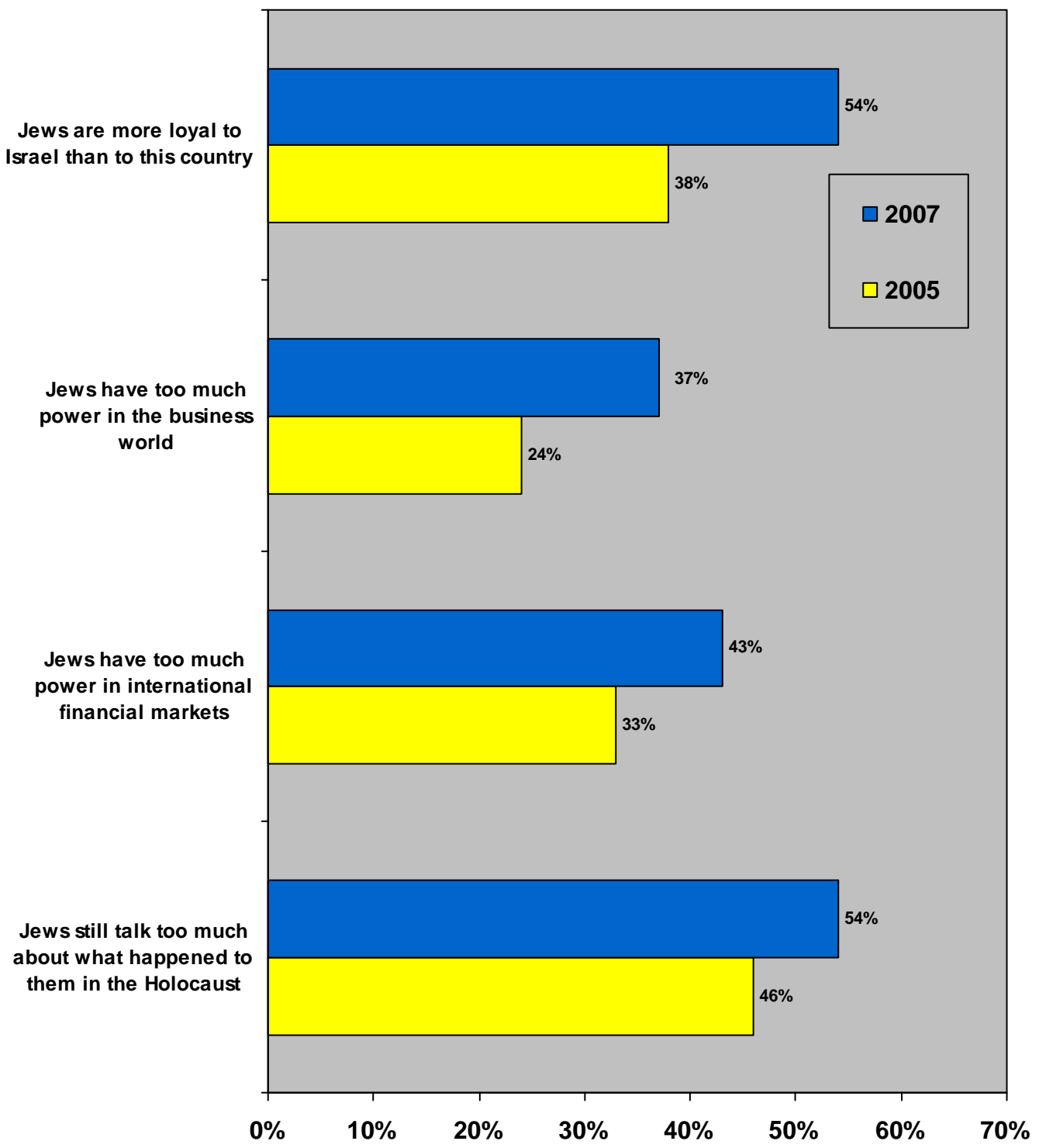
Trends in Anti-Semitic Attitudes

In 2005, the Anti-Defamation League conducted similar surveys of attitudes toward Jews in each of these six countries. The following section compares results from the 2005 survey with results from the recently completed 2007 tracking survey.

- A comparison with the 2005 survey indicates that over the past two years there has been a marked increase in the acceptance of all the traditional anti-Semitic stereotypes in the 6 countries tested.
- Respondents in Austria, Belgium and Hungary are more likely to believe each of the four anti-Semitic stereotypes tested than they were two years ago.
- By far the most troubling development since 2005 has been the dramatic increase in the likelihood of Europeans questioning the loyalty of their Jewish citizens.
- The percentage of those believing that “Jews are more loyal to Israel than to this country” has increased by 16 percent in Austria, 13 percent in Belgium, 13 percent in Hungary, 10 percent in the Netherlands, 6 percent in Switzerland, and 11 percent in the United Kingdom.
- Since 2005, there has been a 15 point increase in the percentage of Swiss respondents who believe that Jews have too much power in the business world.
- The 2007 survey showed an increase in the belief that Jews have too much power in international financial markets. In fact, more than six in ten Hungarian respondents now believe this stereotype to be “probably true.”
- Of the six countries surveyed, only the Netherlands saw a decrease in the acceptance of 3 out of 4 of the anti-Semitic stereotypes presented. As stated above, the only increase in the Netherlands revolved around the questioning of the loyalties of its Jewish citizens.
- There has been a significant shift in the opinions of respondents regarding the cause of violence directed against European Jews. In all six countries surveyed, the percentage of respondents now citing “anti-Jewish feelings” as the cause of the violence directed against Europe’s Jews has increased in the past two years.

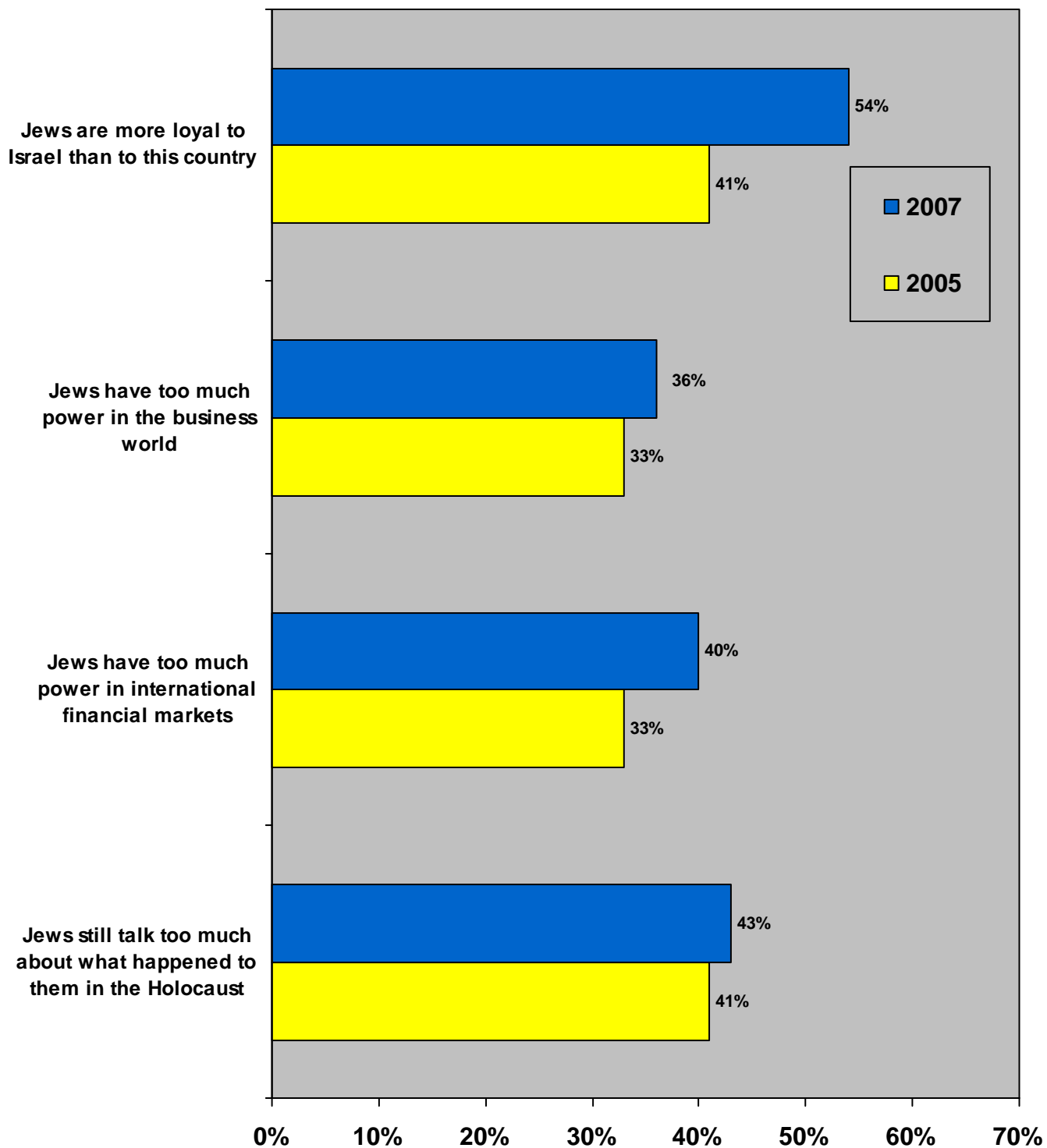
Austria

Percent responding “probably true” to each statement



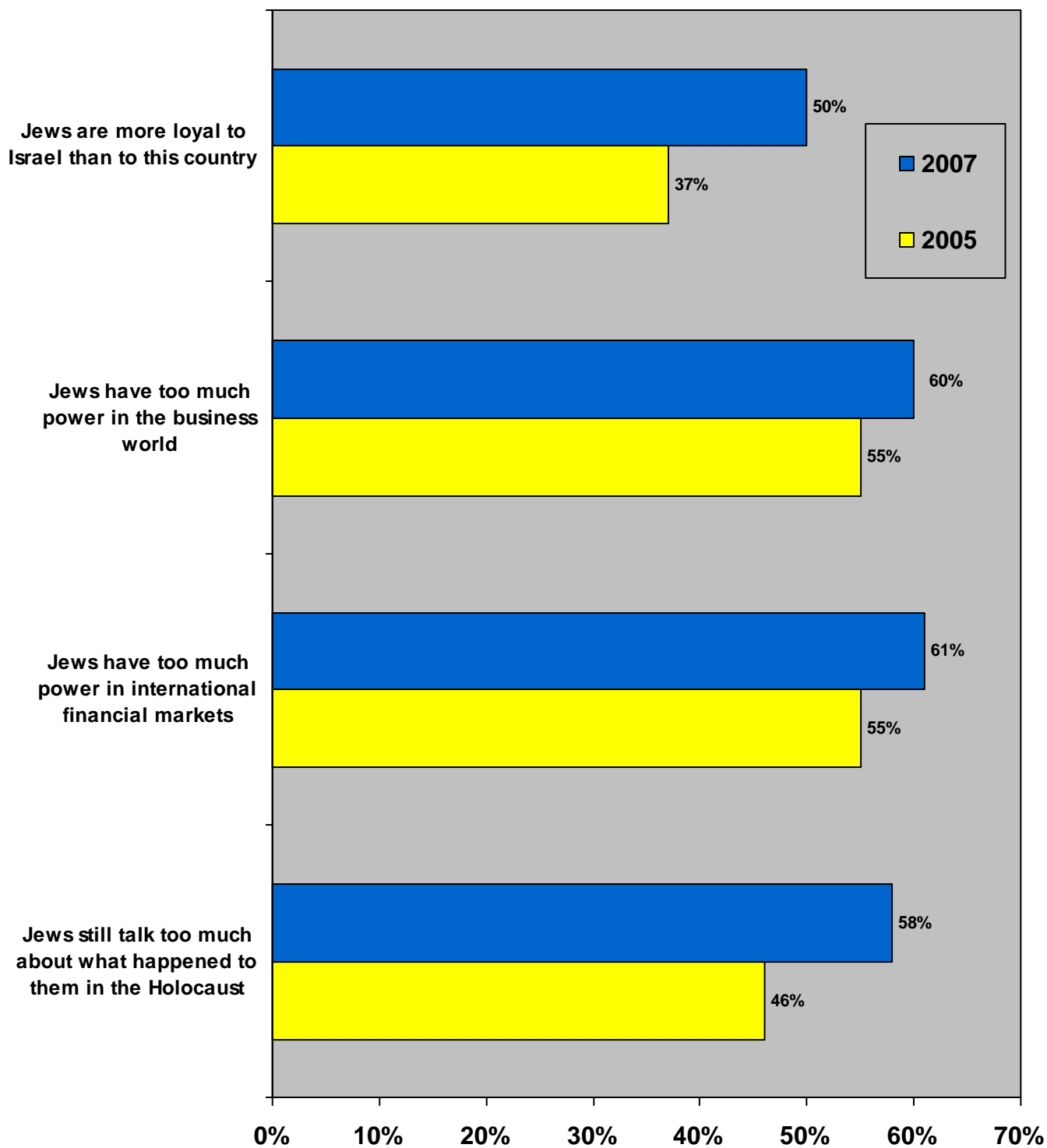
Belgium

Percent responding "probably true" to each statement



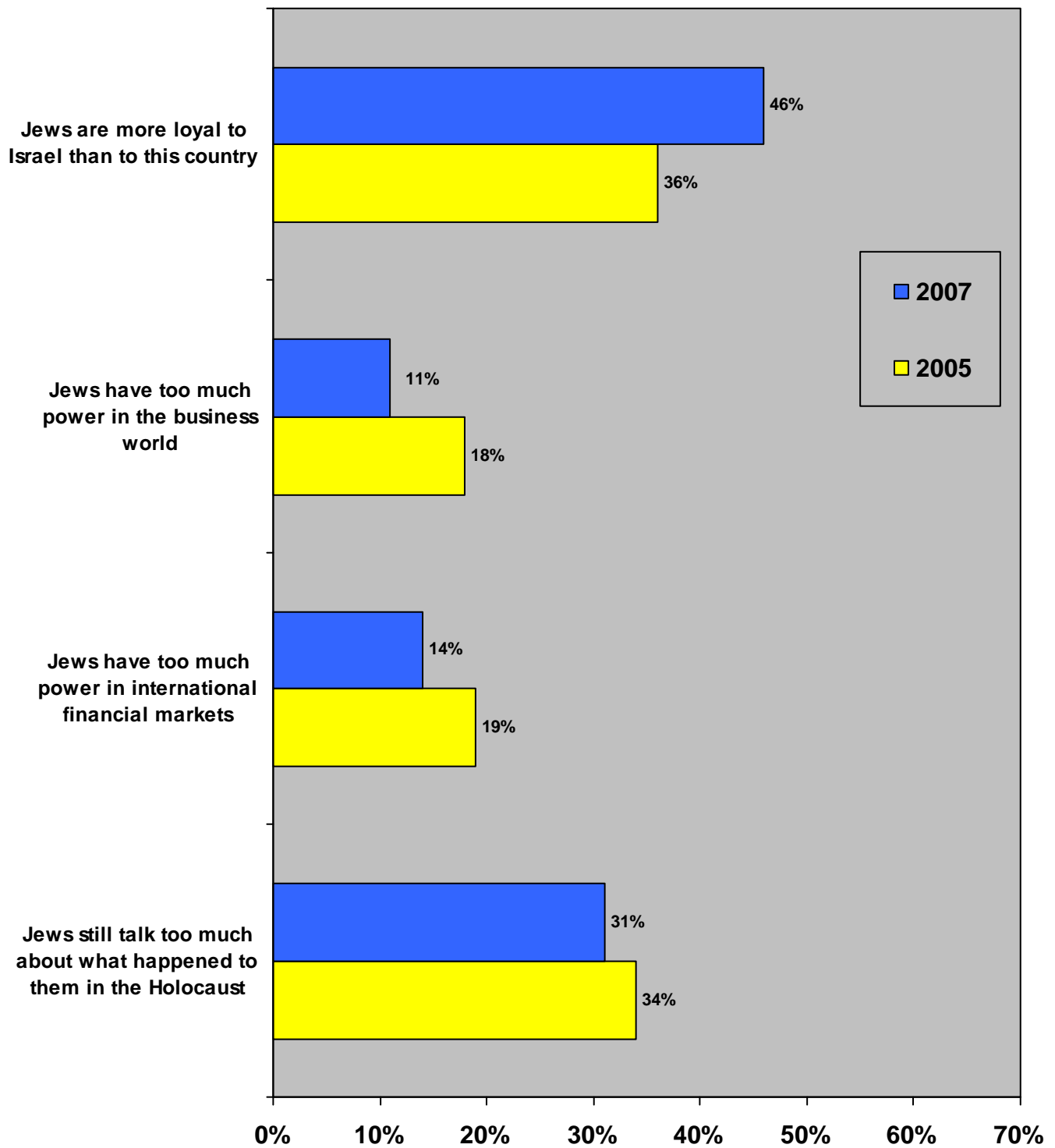
Hungary

Percent responding "probably true" to each statement



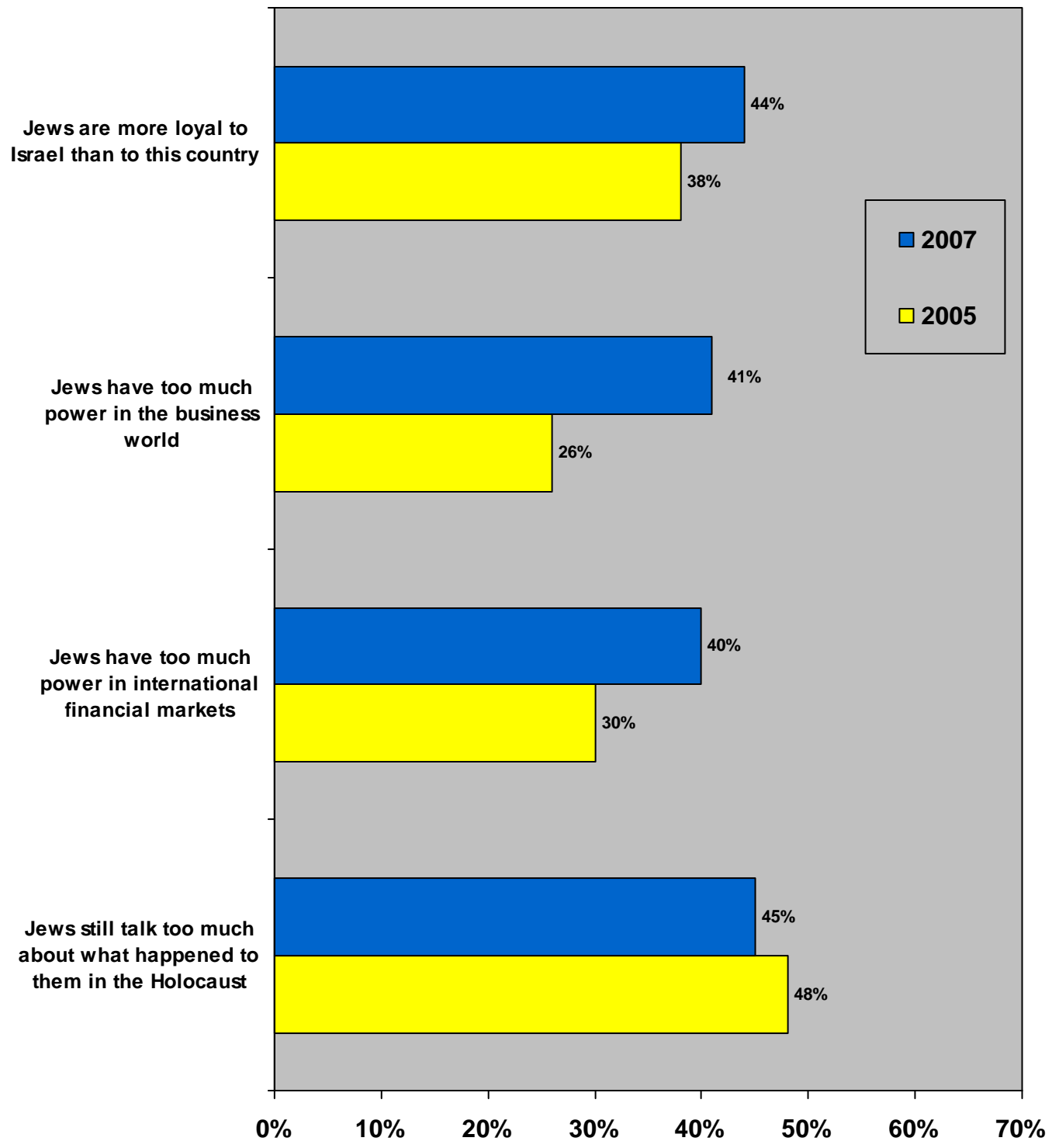
The Netherlands

Percent responding "probably true" to each statement



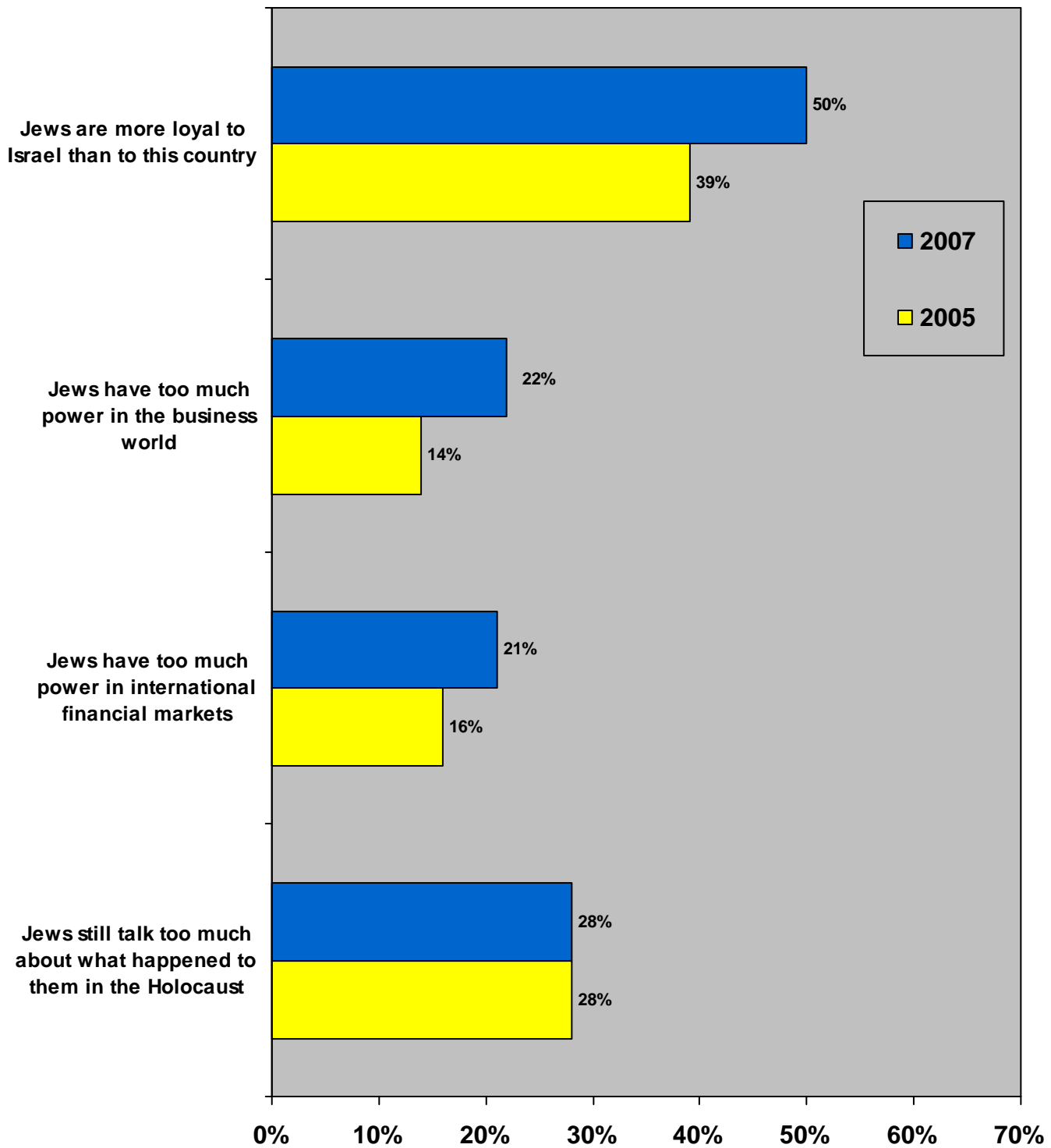
Switzerland

Percent responding “probably true” to each statement



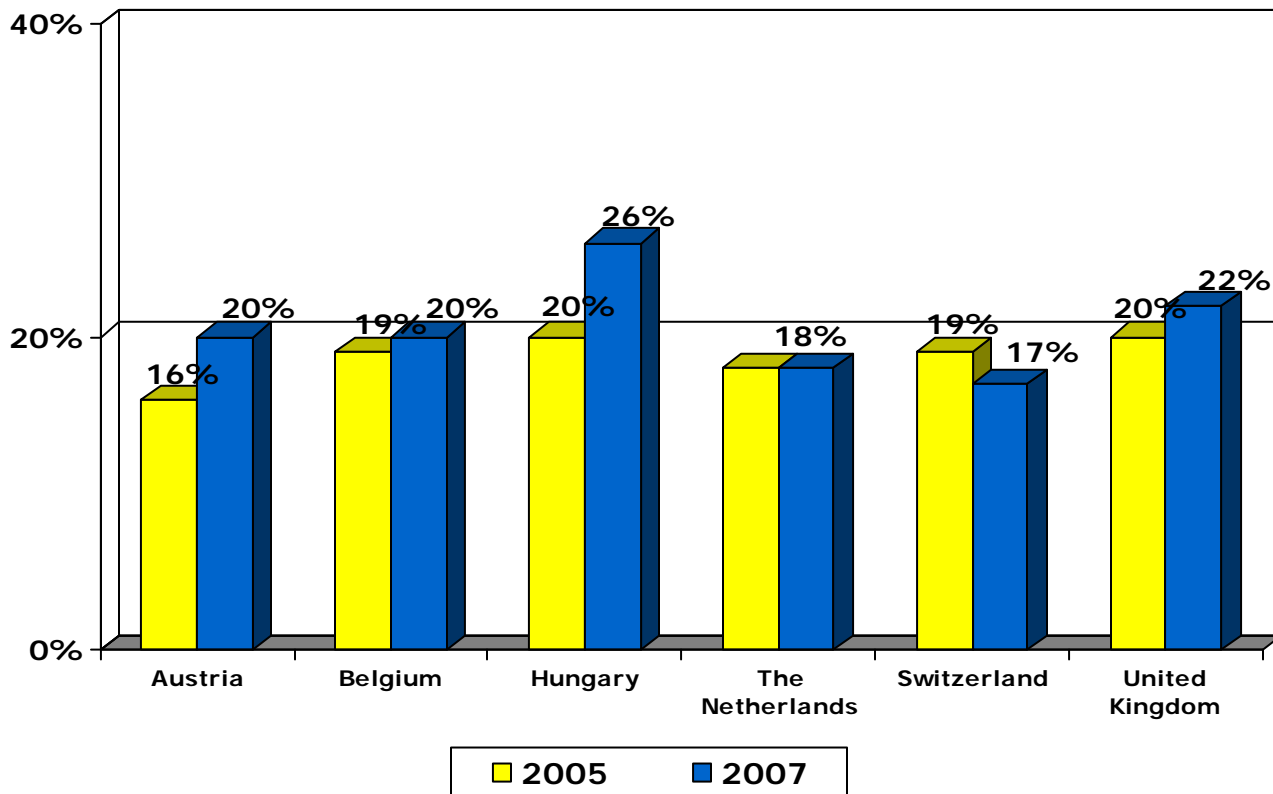
United Kingdom

Percent responding "probably true" to each statement



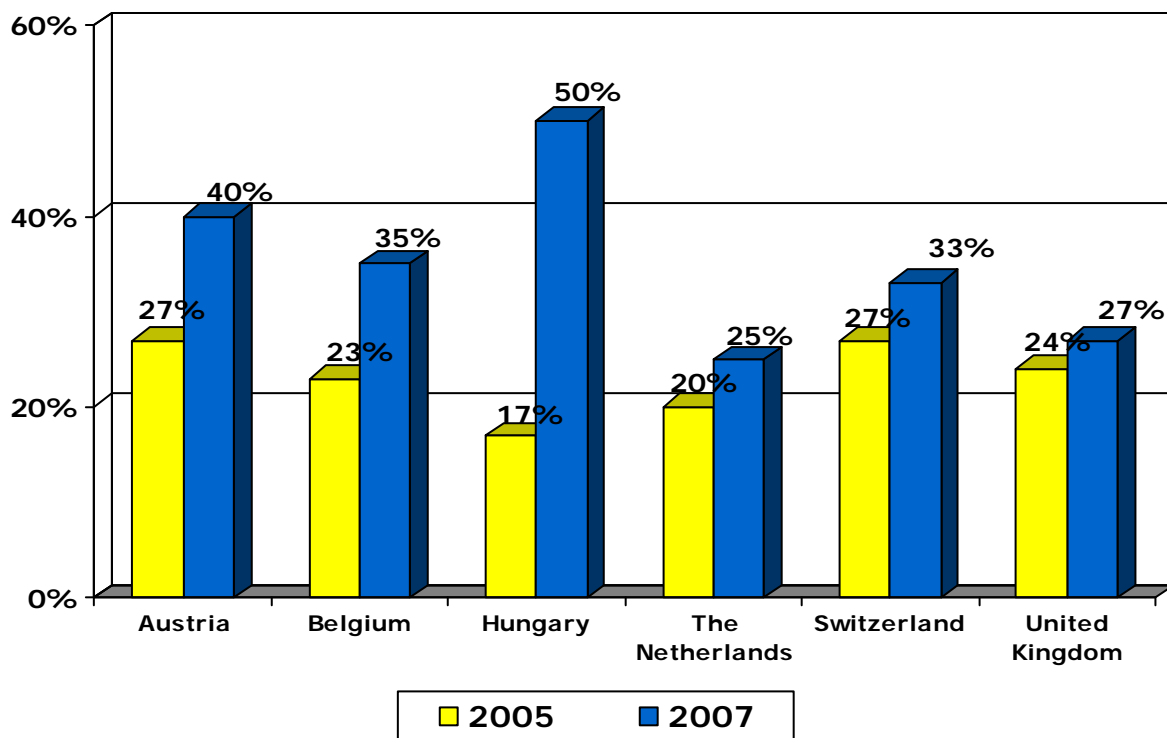
Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree with the following statement: "The Jews are responsible for the death of Christ."

Percent responding "strongly agree" + "somewhat agree"

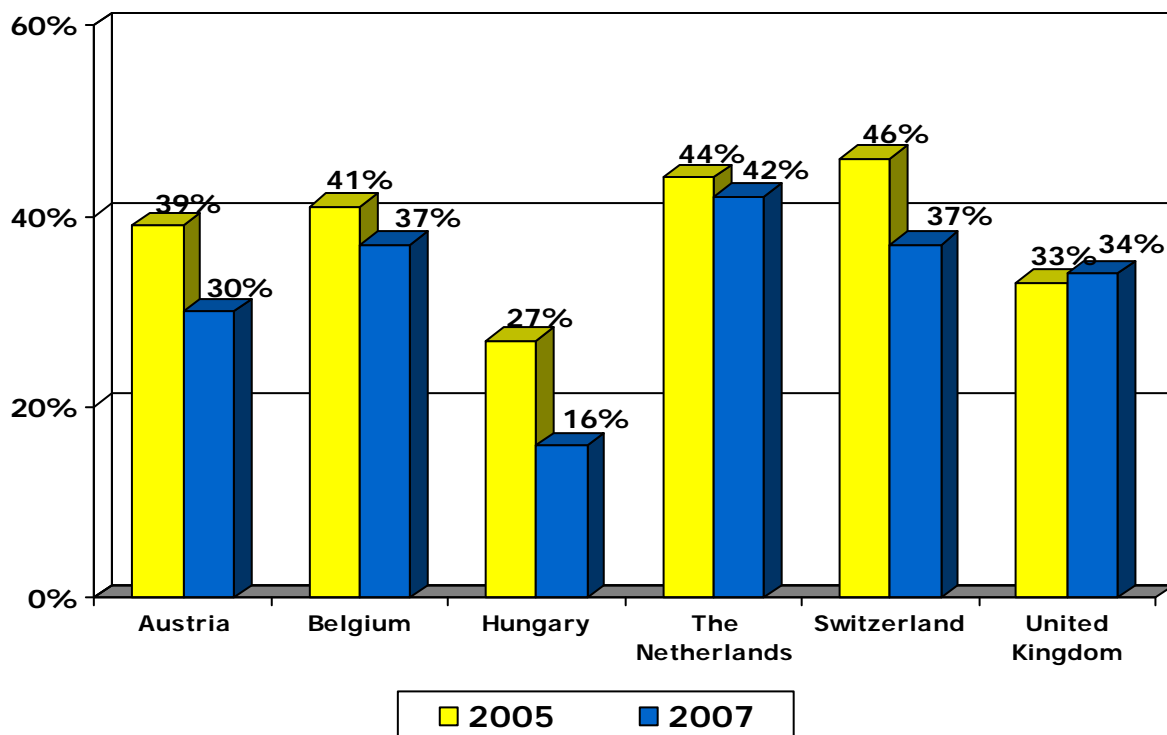


In your opinion, is the violence directed against European Jews a result of anti-Jewish feelings or a result of anti-Israel sentiment?

Percent responding "anti-Jewish feelings"



Percent responding "anti-Israel sentiment"

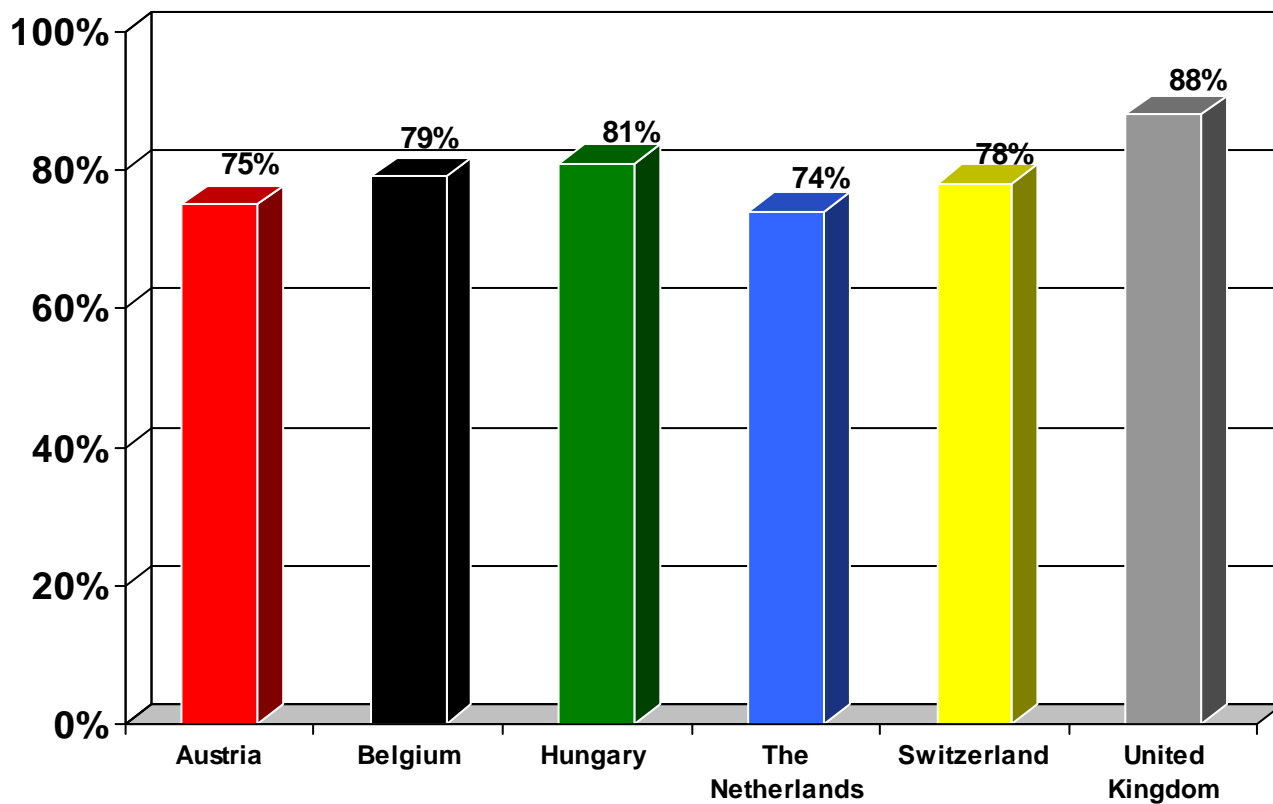


Attitudes Toward the Middle East

Opinions Regarding Iran

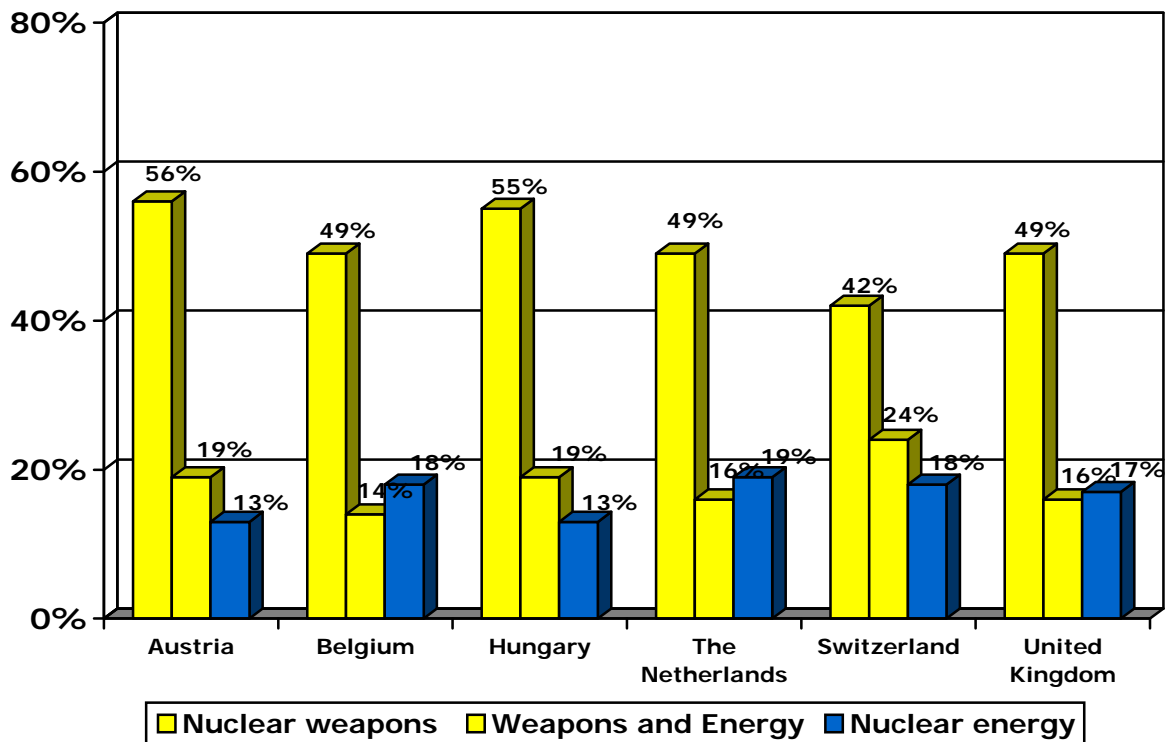
- An overwhelming percentage of respondents in each of the six countries surveyed are concerned about the prospects of Iran developing nuclear weapons.

Are you very concerned, somewhat concerned, somewhat unconcerned or not all concerned about Iran developing nuclear weapons?
Percent responding "very concerned or somewhat concerned"



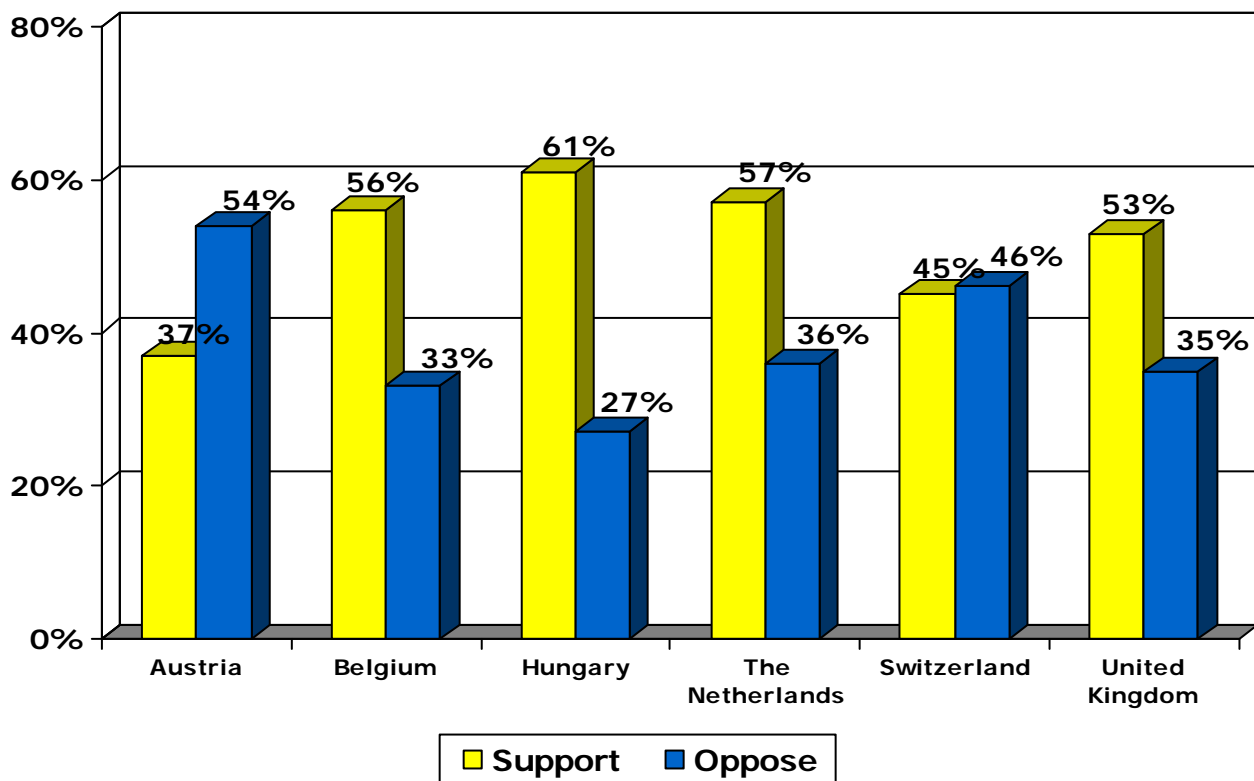
- A majority of respondents in each of the six countries believe that Iran is developing a nuclear weapons program.
- Overall, 68 percent of those surveyed believe that Iran's nuclear program is being developed for military purposes. 50 percent believe it is being developed solely for military purposes while 18 percent believe that Iran's nuclear program is both a weapons program and a nuclear energy program.
- Only 16 percent of respondents believe that Iran's nuclear program is being developed solely for a nuclear energy program.

Some countries accuse Iran of having a secret nuclear weapons program, but Iran says that it is only developing nuclear energy, not weapons. What do you think -- is Iran's nuclear program being developed for nuclear weapons or nuclear energy?



- Overall, a majority of those surveyed, 51 percent, support imposing sanctions against Iran until it agrees to suspend its nuclear program.
- Support for sanctions is strongest in Hungary and the Netherlands.
- Austria is the only country in which a majority of respondents oppose sanctions against Iran.

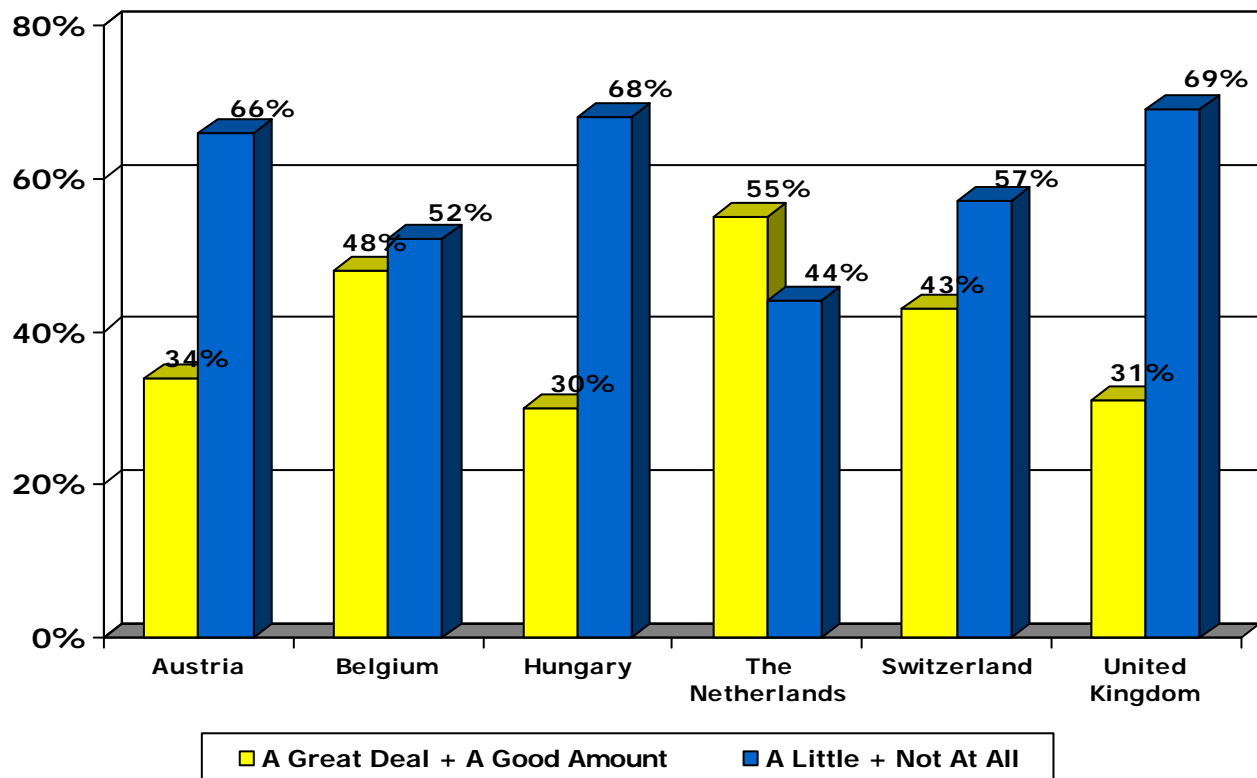
Do you strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose or strongly oppose imposing economic sanctions against Iran until it agrees to suspend its nuclear program?



Attitudes Toward the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict

- Overall, Europeans are paying less attention to the news coverage of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Today, 59 percent of respondents in the six countries tested say that they have been following the coverage of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict a “little” or “not at all.”
- Respondents in the Netherlands, 55 percent, and Belgium, 48 percent, are most likely to be following the media coverage “a great deal” or “a good amount.”

There has been a lot of news coverage of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. How closely have you been following this coverage? Has it been...?



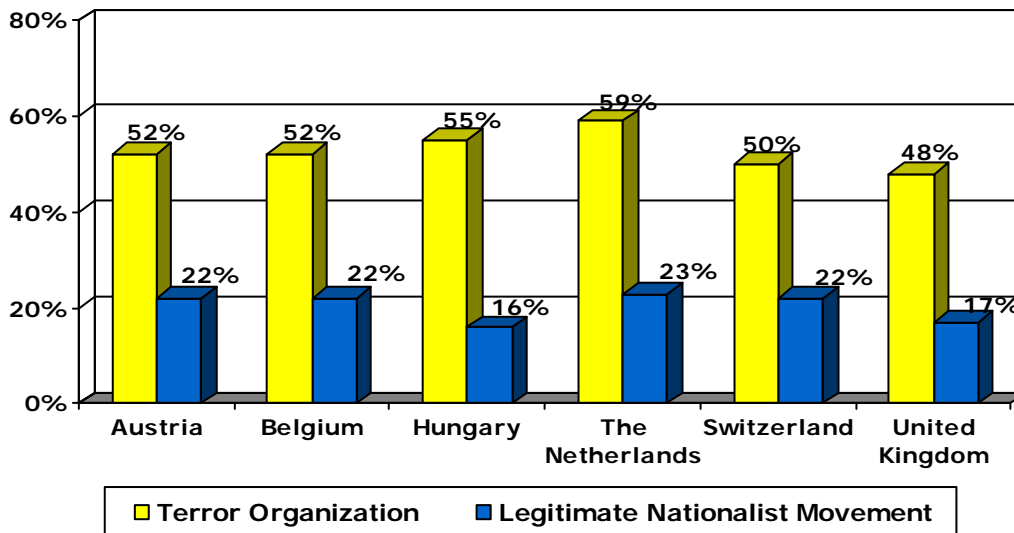
- Overall, respondents are evenly split about the media coverage with 44 percent saying it has been balanced and 41 percent saying it has been biased.
- Of those who believe the media coverage to be biased, a strong majority, 61 percent believe it has been biased in favor of “the Israelis” while 20 percent believe it has been biased in favor of “the Arabs.”

- **When asked which side in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict they sympathize with more, a plurality of respondents in Austria, Belgium, the Netherlands, Hungary and Switzerland answered “neither side.”**
- **The United Kingdom was the only country in which a plurality of those surveyed sympathized more with the Palestinians.**
- **Hungarian and Dutch respondents were the only ones to sympathize more with the Israelis than with the Palestinians.**
- **The following chart illustrates the country-by-country breakdown of respondent sympathies regarding the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.**

| | Austria | Belgium | Hungary | The Netherlands | Switzerland | United Kingdom |
|--|---------|---------|---------|-----------------|-------------|----------------|
| Sympathize more with the Palestinians | 23% | 31% | 11% | 25% | 32% | 32% |
| Sympathize more with the Israelis | 20% | 16% | 22% | 26% | 17% | 18% |
| Both | 9% | 9% | 18% | 13% | 11% | 11% |
| Neither | 41% | 34% | 37% | 27% | 36% | 27% |

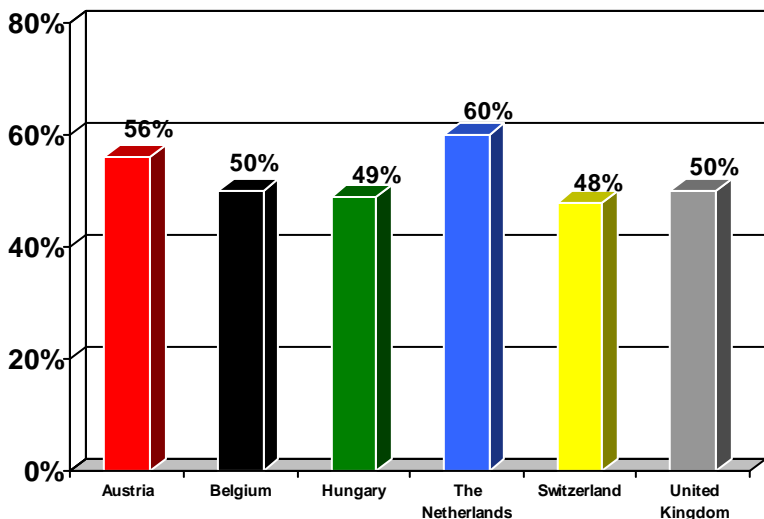
- **Overall, 30 percent view the Palestinians favorably while 21 percent view them unfavorably. However, a plurality of respondents, 39 percent, say that they view the Palestinians “neither favorably nor unfavorably.”**
- **Respondents are more evenly split regarding their views toward Israel with 29 percent viewing Israel favorably and 26 percent viewing Israel unfavorably. A plurality, 37 percent, are neither favorable nor unfavorable toward Israel.**
- **When asked about Hamas, a majority of respondents, 53 percent, consider it to be a terrorist organization. 21 percent consider Hamas as a legitimate nationalist movement.**

Given what you know about the group Hamas, do you consider it to be a terrorist organization or legitimate nationalist movement?

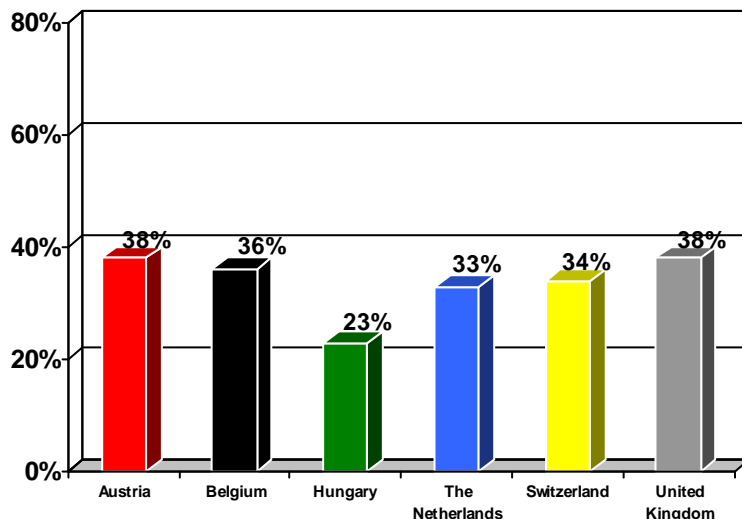


- A majority of respondents, 52 percent, believe that Hamas wants to destroy Israel. 23 percent do not believe this while 25 percent of respondents said they did not know.
- Overall, 34 percent of those surveyed believe that Israel wants to destroy the Palestinian people, while 49 percent differ with this notion.

In your opinion, does Hamas want to destroy Israel?
% responding yes

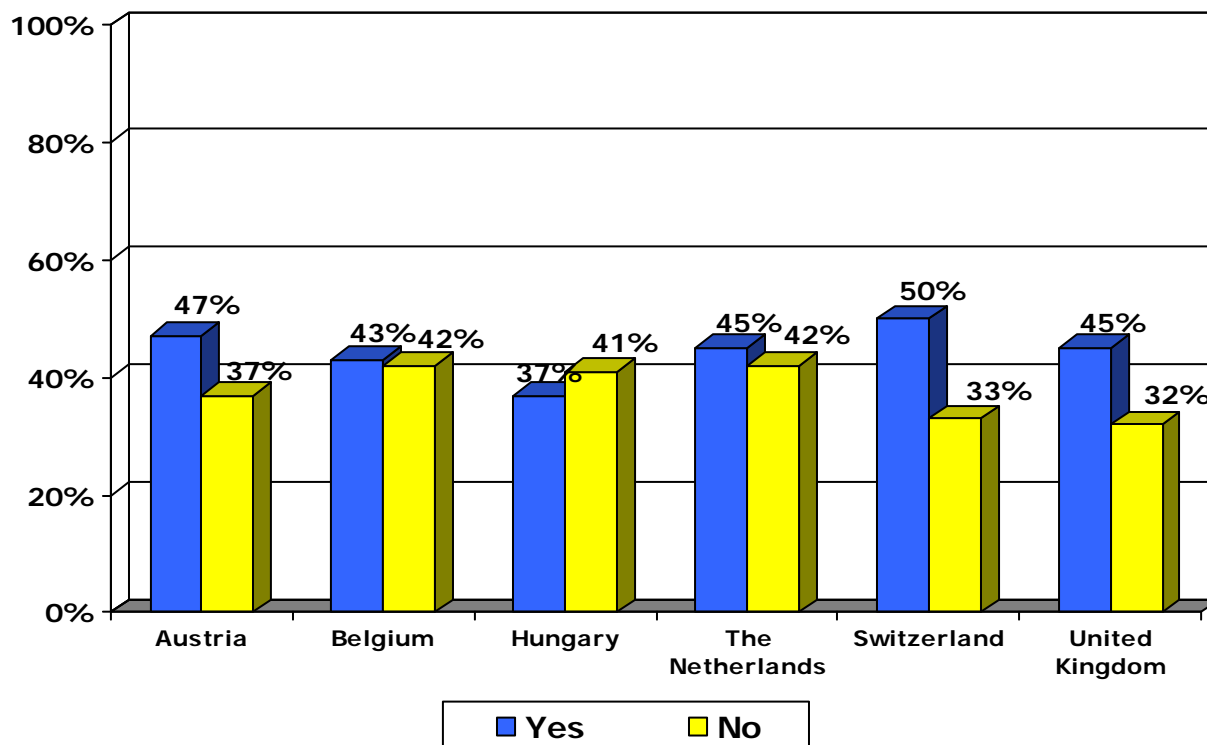


In your opinion, does Israel want to destroy the Palestinian people?
% responding yes



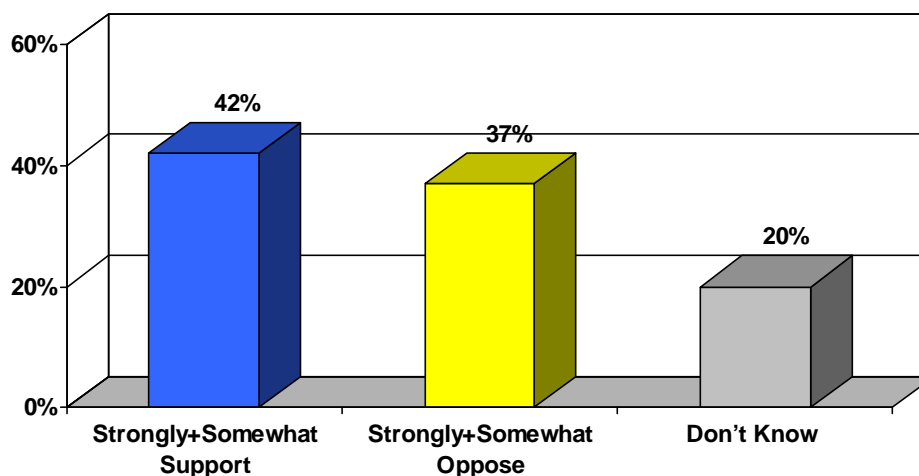
- Overall, 47 percent believe that the “Palestinian Authority truly wants to reach a peace agreement with Israel.”
- Similarly, a majority of respondents, 51 percent, agree that “Israel truly wants to reach a peace agreement with the Palestinians.”
- Hungarian respondents are least likely to believe that the Palestinian Authority wants to reach a peace agreement with Israel and Austrian respondents are least likely to believe in Israel’s desire to achieve peace with the Palestinians.
- Overall, 41 percent of those surveyed believe that Israel’s treatment of Palestinians is similar to South Africa’s treatment of blacks during apartheid.
- Nearly half of those surveyed in Belgium, 49 percent, agree that Israel’s behavior is similar to South Africa’s during apartheid.
- 38 percent of those surveyed do not believe that Israel is an open and democratic society.
- Hungary is the only country in which a plurality of respondents do not believe that Israel is an open and democratic society.

Would you say that Israel is an open and democratic society?



Do you strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose or strongly oppose efforts by UK-based organizations to boycott Israel over its treatment of the Palestinians?

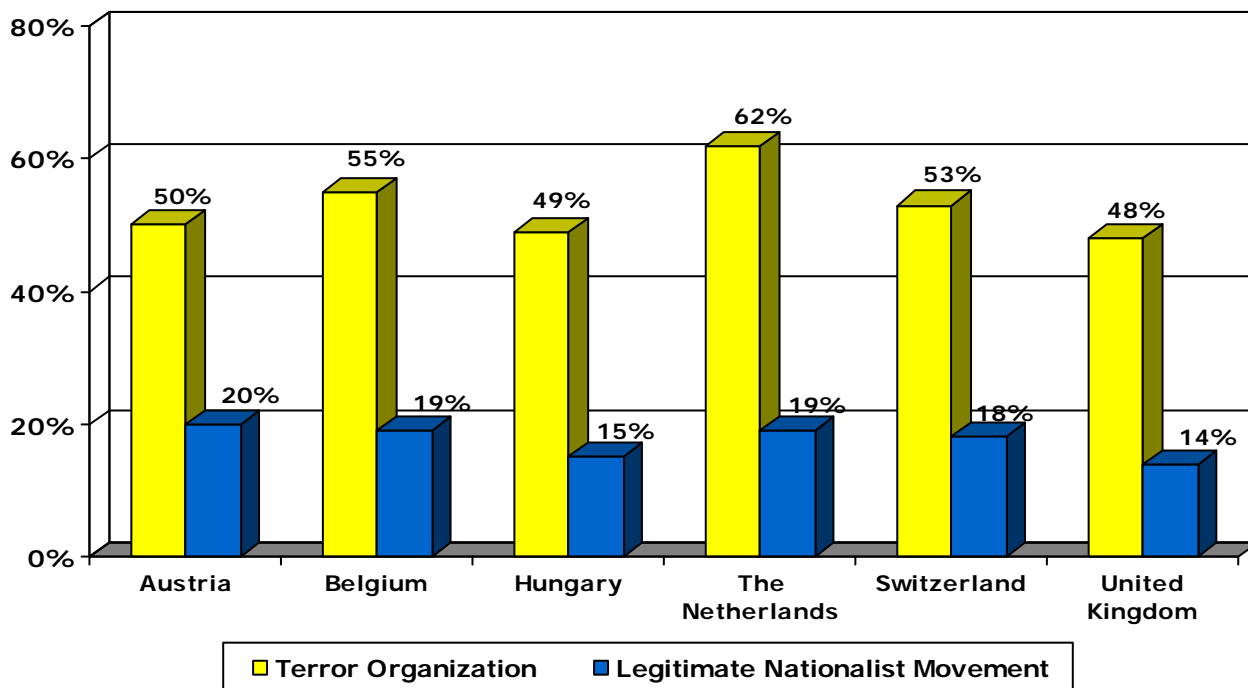
- **By a margin of 42-37 British respondents oppose the efforts by UK-based organizations to boycott Israel.**
- **Respondents over the age of 45 are much more likely than other segments of the British population to “strongly oppose” the efforts to boycott Israel.**
- **Of the 15 percent of those surveyed who say that they “strongly oppose” a boycott of Israel, 79 percent are over the age of 45.**



Opinions Regarding Hezbollah and the 2006 War in Lebanon

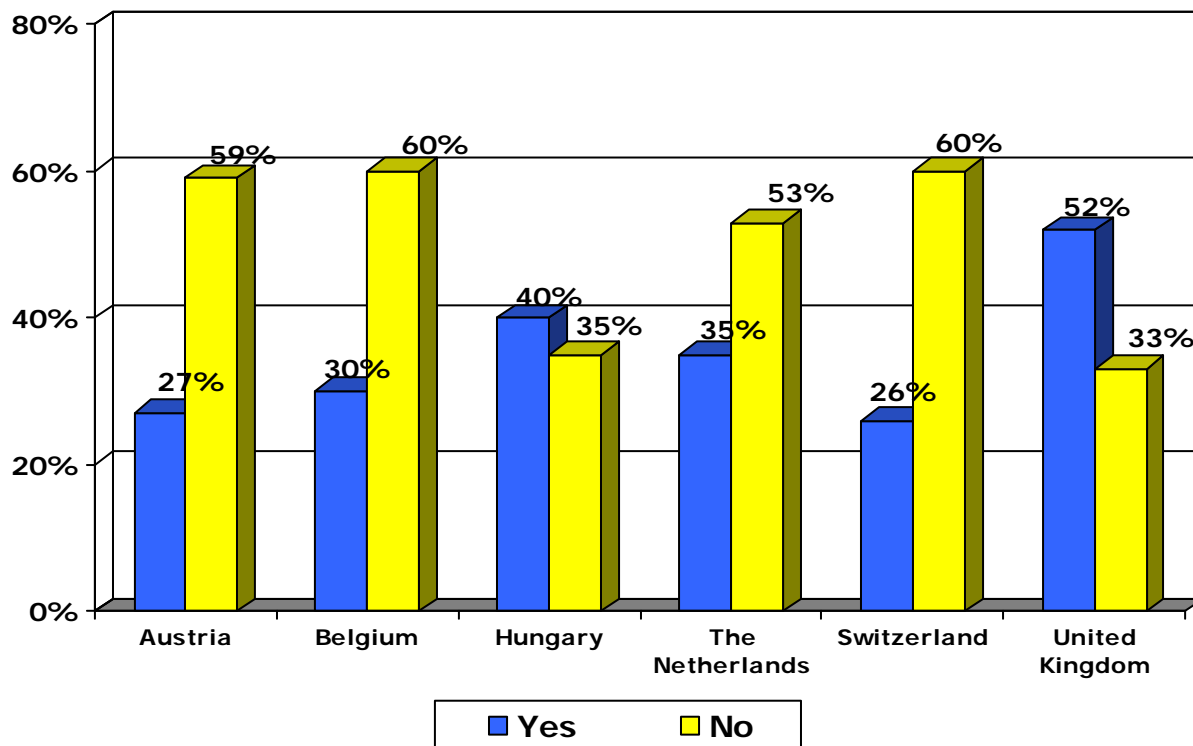
- A majority of those surveyed in all six countries, 53 percent, consider Hezbollah to be a terror organization. Conversely, 17 percent consider Hezbollah a legitimate nationalist movement.
- Dutch respondents are most likely to consider Hezbollah a terrorist organization.

Given what you know about Hezbollah, do you consider it to be a terrorist organization or legitimate nationalist movement?



- Overall, half of those surveyed do not believe that Israel had a right to use military force against Hezbollah in Southern Lebanon in response to attacks against Israeli soldiers.
- The United Kingdom is the only country where a majority of respondents supported Israel's right to use military force against Hezbollah.

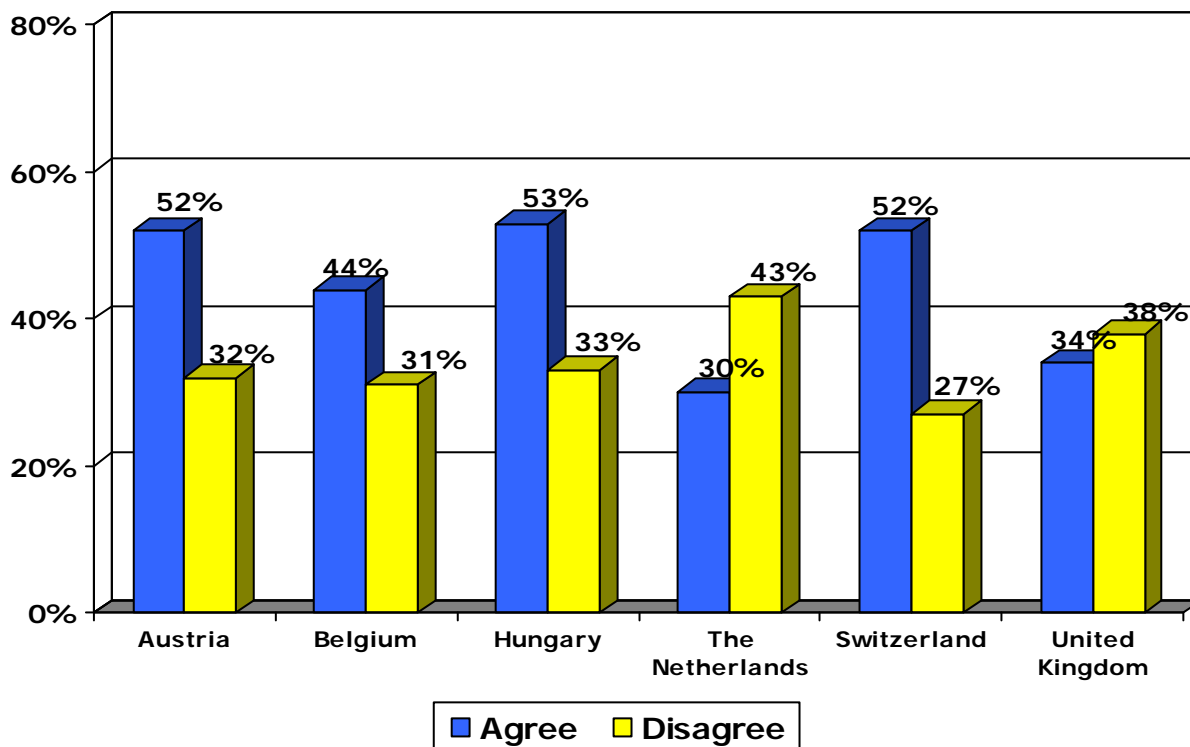
In July 2006, Hezbollah fighters crossed the Lebanese/Israeli border and attacked Israeli soldiers in northern Israel. The operation resulted in the death of eight Israeli soldiers and the capture of two additional Israeli soldiers. Do you think that Israel had a right to use military force against Hezbollah forces in southern Lebanon in response to this attack?



Middle East Policy

- Overall, 40 percent of those surveyed believe that their own government's policies toward the Middle East are even-handed. 35 percent say their government's policies have been biased in favor of Israel while 19 percent believe their government's policies have been biased in favor of the Palestinians.
- A plurality of those surveyed in the six countries, 44 percent, agree with the notion that "American Jews control the U.S. Middle Eastern policy."
- A majority of respondents in Austria, Hungary and Switzerland believe that American Jews control U.S. policy in the Middle East.

Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree with the following statement: "American Jews control U.S. Middle Eastern policy."



Trends in Attitudes Toward Israel

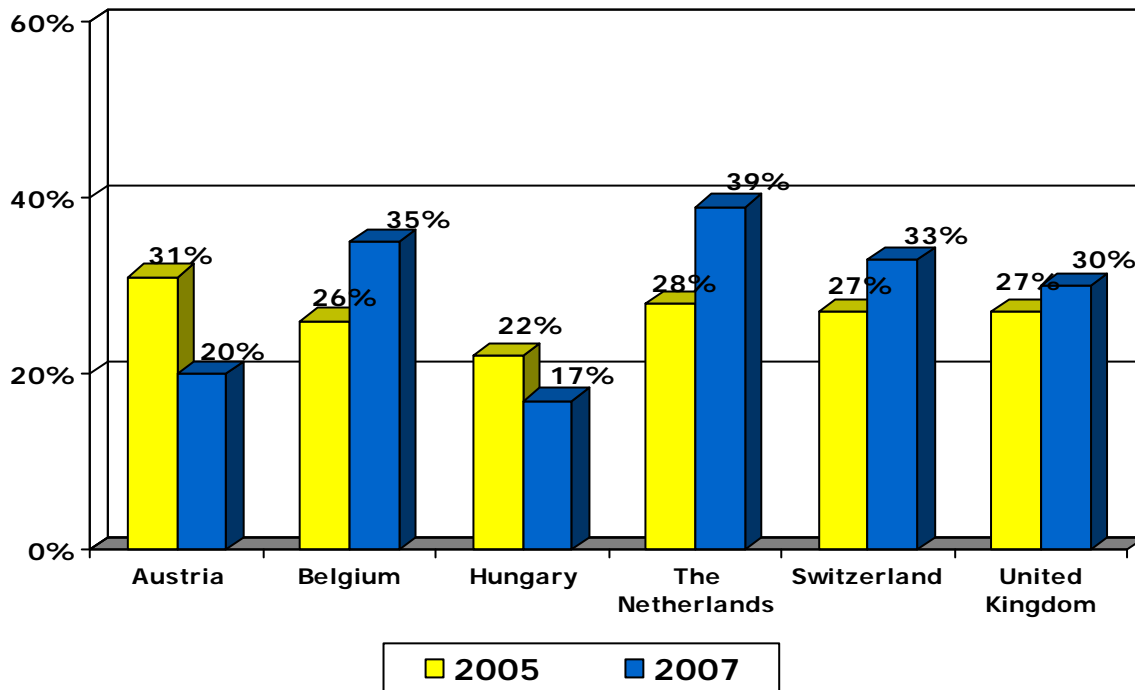
In 2005, the Anti-Defamation League conducted similar surveys of attitudes towards Jews, Israel and the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Where applicable, the following section compares results from the 2005 surveys with results from the recently completed 2007 surveys.

- Overall, attitudes toward Israel have changed only slightly over the course of the past two years.
- Respondents in Belgium, Holland, Switzerland and the United Kingdom now view Israel more favorably while Israel's favorability rating has dropped in Austria and Hungary.
- The largest jump in favorability toward Israel was seen in the Netherlands (11 points) and Belgium (9 points).
- When thinking about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, levels of sympathy for the Israelis have increased in every country. Sympathy for the Palestinians has decreased in every country except Belgium and the United Kingdom.
- Sympathy for Israel has increased most in Austria (7 points) and Hungary (7 points) while sympathy for the Palestinians has seen the largest increase in the United Kingdom (5 points).
- Respondents in each of the six countries surveyed are less likely than they were two years ago to believe that the Palestinians or the Israelis truly want to reach a peace agreement.
- Austria and Hungary have witnessed the most dramatic change. In 2005, 57 percent of Austrians and 56 percent of Hungarians agreed with the statement that "Israel truly wants to reach a peace agreement with the Palestinians." Today, that number stands at 43 percent in each of those two countries.
- Likewise, in 2005, 59 percent of Austrians and 48 percent of Hungarians agreed with the statement that "the Palestinian Authority truly wants to reach a peace agreement with Israel." Today, that number stands at 37 percent in Austria and 28 percent in Hungary.

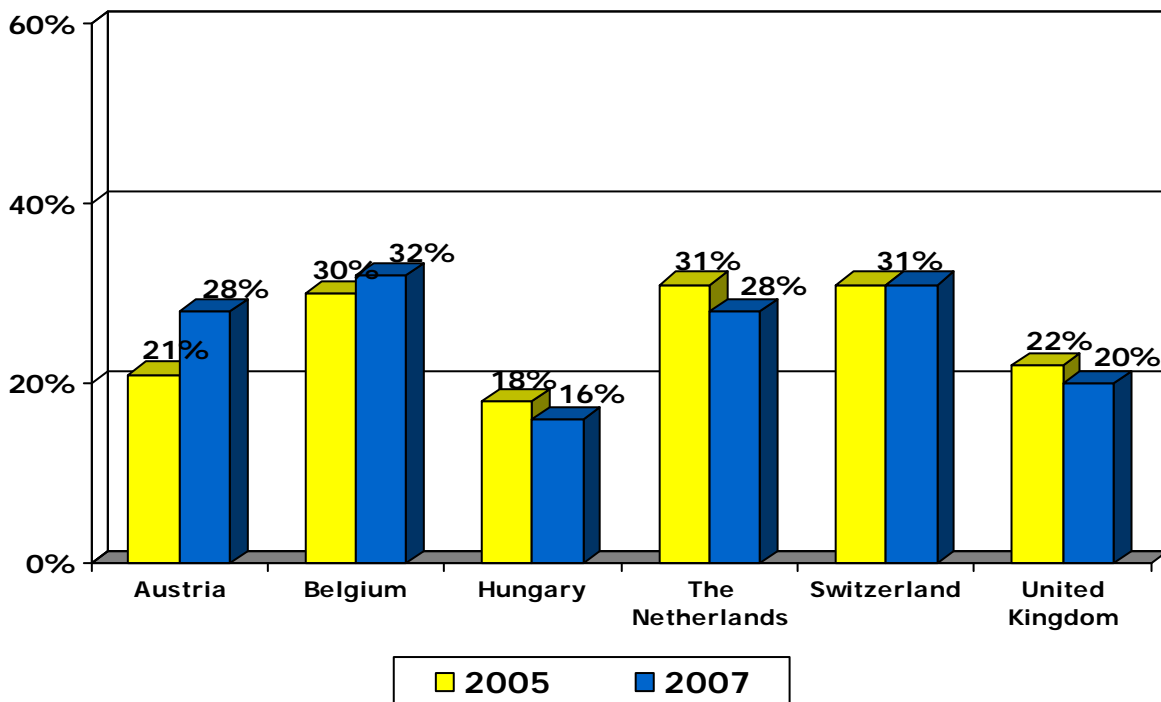
- **Since 2005, there has been a slight increase in the percentage of respondents who believe that Israel is an open and democratic society. The largest increase has been in Switzerland where half of those surveyed now believe that Israel is an open and democratic society. In 2005 that number stood at 42 percent.**
- **Austrian respondents are now the only ones who are less likely than they were two years ago to respond favorably when asked if Israel is an open and democratic society.**

Thinking generally about Israel, would you say that your views are very favorable, fairly favorable, neither favorable nor unfavorable, fairly unfavorable, or very unfavorable?

Percent responding “very” or “fairly” favorable

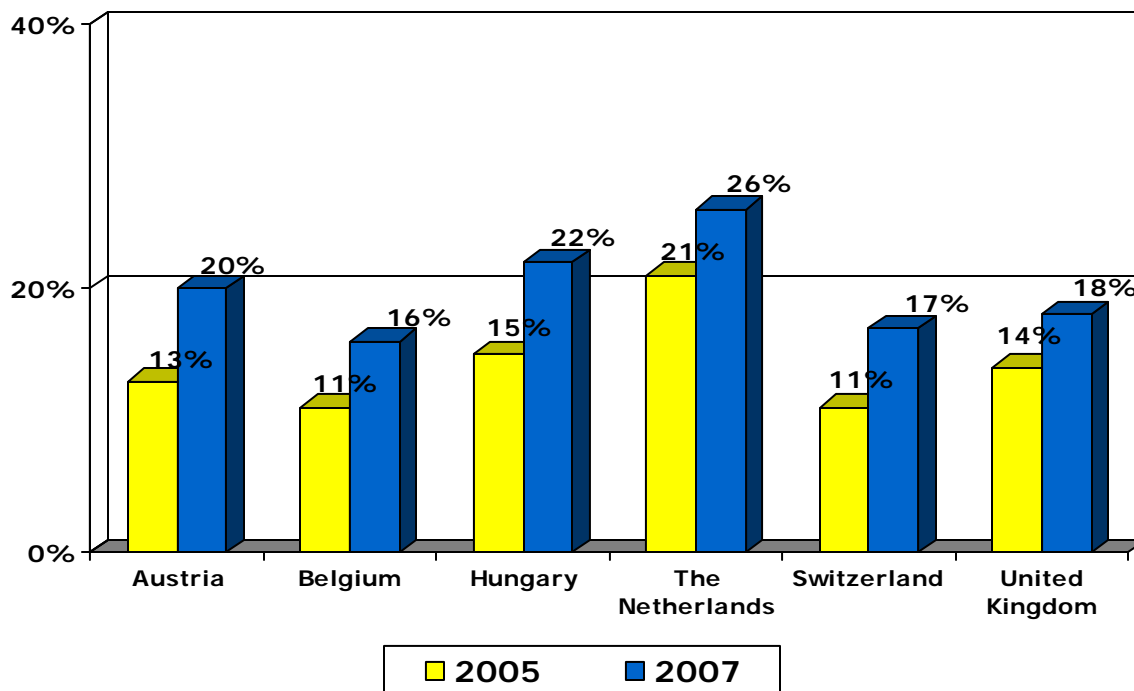


Percent responding “very” or “fairly” unfavorable

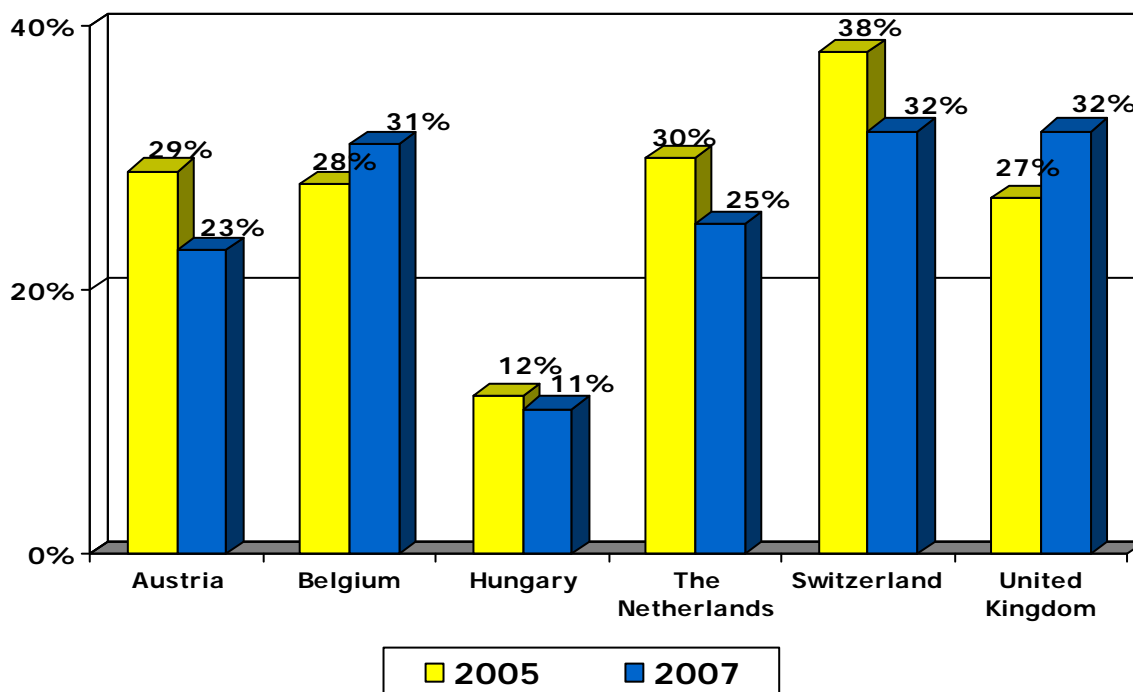


Thinking specifically about the current conflict between Israel and the Palestinians, are your sympathies more with the Israelis or more with the Palestinians?

Percent responding "more with the Israelis"



Percent responding "more with the Palestinians"



Please tell me whether you agree a lot, agree a little, disagree a little or disagree a lot with the following statement: “Israel truly wants to reach a peace agreement with the Palestinians.”

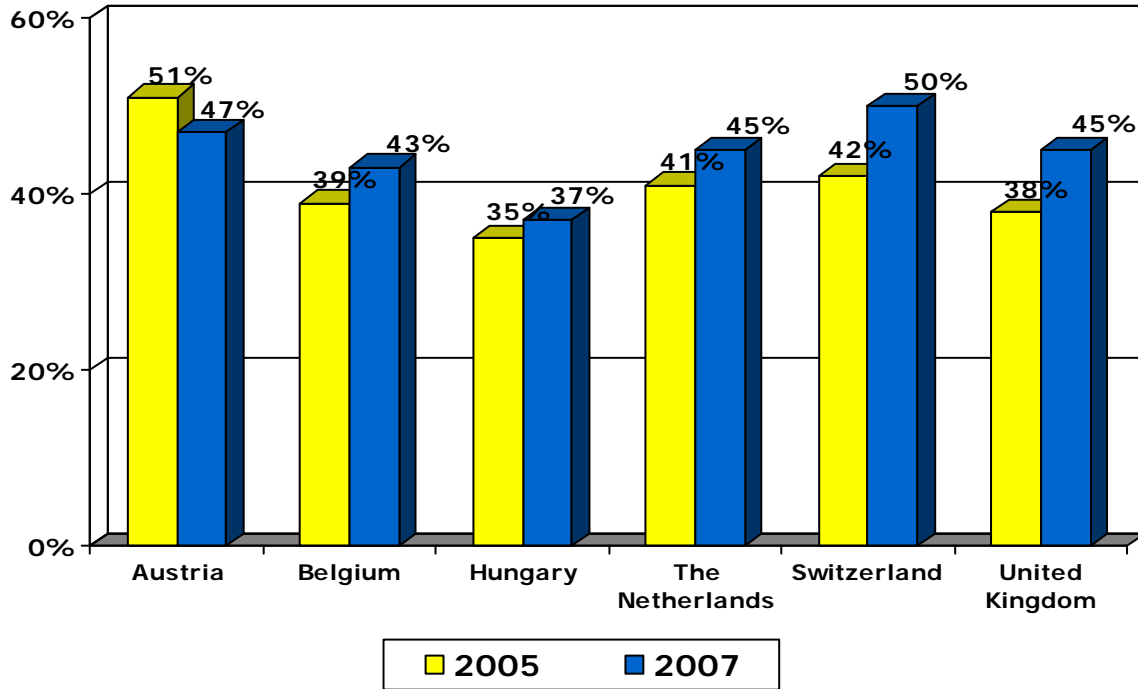
| | <u>Austria</u> | | <u>Belgium</u> | | <u>Hungary</u> | | <u>Netherlands</u> | | <u>Switzerland</u> | | <u>UK</u> | |
|-----------------|----------------|-----|----------------|-----|----------------|-----|--------------------|-----|--------------------|-----|-----------|-----|
| | '05 | '07 | '05 | '07 | '05 | '07 | '05 | '07 | '05 | '07 | '05 | '07 |
| Agree | 57 | 43 | 57 | 56 | 56 | 43 | 58 | 59 | 54 | 49 | 57 | 54 |
| Disagree | 18 | 31 | 25 | 32 | 16 | 22 | 27 | 38 | 22 | 35 | 17 | 24 |

Please tell me whether you agree a lot, agree a little, disagree a little or disagree a lot with the following statement: “The Palestinian Authority truly wants to reach a peace agreement with Israel.”

| | <u>Austria</u> | | <u>Belgium</u> | | <u>Hungary</u> | | <u>Netherlands</u> | | <u>Switzerland</u> | | <u>UK</u> | |
|-----------------|----------------|-----|----------------|-----|----------------|-----|--------------------|-----|--------------------|-----|-----------|-----|
| | '05 | '07 | '05 | '07 | '05 | '07 | '05 | '07 | '05 | '07 | '05 | '07 |
| Agree | 59 | 37 | 65 | 59 | 48 | 28 | 57 | 55 | 65 | 56 | 56 | 48 |
| Disagree | 15 | 34 | 14 | 27 | 20 | 39 | 27 | 31 | 15 | 27 | 16 | 28 |

In your opinion is Israel an open and democratic society?

Percent responding "Yes"



Percent responding "No"

