

**FAQ on the World Zionist Congress and the National Institutions:
World Zionist Organization (WZO),
Keren Kayemet L'Yisrael (World Jewish National Fund (JNF),
Jewish Agency for Israel (JAFI), and
Keren Hayesod-United Israel Appeal (UIA)**

How are the American WZO delegates allocated as a result of these elections?

Per the WZO constitution, the United States will send 152 delegates to the Zionist Congress. These delegates will be divided proportionately between the 21 slates competing for votes based upon the results of this election.

How does the World Zionist Congress work and what types of decisions does it take?

The make-up of the World Zionist Congress, the result of the selection of delegates from all over the world, dictates the relative strength of the different caucuses across the political and religious spectrum.

Any caucus can then bring resolutions to the Congress regarding both policy and operational aspects of its work. During the actual Congress gathering resolutions are deliberated upon in committees and then the plenum, with votes taken at the end of the Congress session. Any resolutions not addressed by the closing of the Congress are sent to the Va'ad Hapoel (Zionist General Council) for further deliberation and vote.

The Va'ad Hapoel meets every year between Congresses to take up previous and new resolutions brought forth by the various caucuses. The make-up of the Va'ad Hapoel is roughly one member for every four delegates elected to the Congress. For example, if a caucus has 20 members at the Zionist Congress, they will appoint five of them to be their representatives to the Va'ad Hapoel for the subsequent five years.

How are the various caucuses constituted?

They generally reflect either a religious or political identity and can include delegates from all over the world. For example, the Hatikvah Slate members join like-minded delegates from other countries, including Israel, as part of the World Union of Meretz and the World Labor Zionist Alliance.

What is the relationship between the different national Institution organizations? What are the lines of governance?

Here is where it gets interesting and more complicated, all at the same time. The Zionist Congress elects the Va'ad Hapoel members and all of the other related WZO entities. The Congress also elects the members of World JNF Board of Directors and the WZO Va'ad Hapoel also serves as the General Assembly of World JNF, which is the highest decision-making body of World JNF.

So it is easy to see that the WZO has 100% governance responsibility and control for both the WZO and World JNF.

WZO representatives make up 50% of the governance bodies of JAFI and UIA, with the other 50% at JAFI going to representatives from Jewish Federations of North America and the UIA. The UIA serves as a fundraising arm for Jewish communities outside of the U.S. and controls the other 50% of its own board.

What bodies carry out the decisions taken by the Congress and how are they constituted? Are they compromised of only professionals, or do they include lay people, like those who attend the Congress?

Each of the National Institutions has various governing bodies comprised of a combination of professionals and lay people. In every case, diaspora and Israeli lay people sit on Executive Committees, Boards of Governors and Boards of Directors of the four National Institutions. It is not always simple or easy to overcome the tendency of the professionals to want to make all of the decisions, but well-organized lay people can make a difference, especially when it comes to implementation of Congress resolutions.

The AZM, the Hatikvah Slate and others have spoken about how annual budgets totaling \$1 billion are at stake in these elections. How exactly are budgetary decisions made and how can our slate's delegates really impact those decisions?

Each of the four different National Institutions, the WZO, World JNF, JAFI and UIA), whose budgets comprise the \$1 billion, each has its own budgetary decision-making process. The delegate allocation at the Congress dictates the strength of each ideological caucus within each and every board of directors of those entities. In addition, there are a certain number of politically appointed professional leadership positions that are also allocated based upon the relative strengths of the caucuses.

Simply put, the more delegates we earn through the election process, the greater our representation in both professional and lay positions.

To be truly effective, our representatives must play multiple roles within the various boards. First of all, they work in coalition with other groups, whether it is with centrist Israel political parties or the liberal religious streams. They meet regularly to share information and coordinate positions on issues coming up for discussion and decision.

Secondly, during every budget process, there are careful reviews of the proposed budgets to make sure programs important to us are protected and to see whether there are attempts to slip in problematic allocations. Sometimes the most impact we can have is blocking such projects.

Can you give some examples of accomplishments by our slate and its representatives during the current term in office?

One category includes opportunities when we have taken leadership in influencing WZO policies, including passing resolutions on Israeli democracy, judicial independence, LGBTQ+ rights, and Israel-Diaspora relations. In this context, we organized a demonstration outside

the Israel Supreme Court during the extraordinary gathering of the Zionist Congress in 2023, galvanizing support for our positions.

Another area of influence is regarding the World JNF budget, where one of our representatives served as chair of the Finance Committee. Using this role, he could ensure that allocations were fairly distributed according to across-the-board agreements and in a transparent manner. By appointing board members who are aligned with our vision to the World JNF Board of Directors, we can serve as a “watchdog” regarding West Bank land purchases and other investment in settlement activities.

As best as we are able, we can block funds flowing in that direction.

JAFI is a significant funder of shlichim (emissaries) sent around the world to serve in large and small communities. Included in this are the youth movements represented on our slate, Habonim Dror and Hashomer Hatzair. Our representatives on the JAFI Board of Governors have led the opposition to regular attempts to cut these allocations.

As a result of our share of delegates at the World Zionist Congress, our representatives have served as executive chairs of WZO departments and allocated funding to a variety of programs aligned with the values expressed in the Hatikvah Slate platform. They include, among many others:

- Establishment of the Nitzan Philanthropic Fund advancing gender equality initiatives in Israel.
- Support for pride events worldwide, championed the World LGBTQ+ Jewish Congress, and launched an “LGBTQ+ Aliyah” platform.
- Creation of the new Cultural Humanistic Judaism unit to support communities all around the world.
- Development of educational programs for use in Israel and the diaspora focused on values from Israel’s Declaration of Independence and dedicated to the legacy of Prime Minister Itzhak Rabin and his belief in democracy, peace and security.
- Establishment of social justice centers in cities across Israel, including mixed Jewish-Arab cities, and in the Gaza Envelope, to promote civic engagement and collaborative leadership.

