

## The Israeli presidential election 2021

**Candidates:** Yitzhak “Boogie” Herzog and Miriam Peretz

**The process** – Israel’s president is a largely ceremonial position, elected by it’s parliamentarians, members of Knesset.

The 2021 elections were held in a special assembly of the Knesset, at the height of coalition negotiations for the new Government.

119 MKs participated in the vote. 26 voted for Miriam Peretz and 87 voted for Yitzhak Herzog. It was the biggest majority in the history of the presidential elections, and the first child of a former president to be elected to the position.

**Yitzhak Herzog (Winner)** - considered part of the 'Israeli aristocracy', the grandson of the first Chief Rabbi of Israel, Rabbi Yitzchak Halevi Herzog, who was also the Chief Rabbi Ireland.

He is the son of Aura and Haim Herzog. Haim was a law graduate from Cambridge, former Chairman of UJS, a World war II veteran of the British Army, Israel ambassador to the UN, and the 6th president of Israel between 1983 to 1993.

Yitzhak Herzog is the nephew of Abba Eban, formerly Israel's ambassador to the UN and Foreign Minister. Abba was married to Suzy Eban, the sister of Aura Herzog.

Yitzhak served in Unit 8200 of the Intelligence Corps, a prestigious unit within the IDF. There he met his future wife, Michal Afek. Later, they both studied law at Tel Aviv University and got married during their studies.

He was a political activist in the Israeli Labor Party and an adviser to Yitzhak Rabin and Shimon Peres and cabinet secretary of Prime Minister of Ehud Barak. In 2003 he was elected for the first time as a Knesset Member in the Israeli Labor Party. He later served as Minister of Construction, Minister of Tourism and Minister of Welfare and Social Services. In 2013 he was elected leader of the Israeli Labor Party, and in 2014 he joined forces with Tzipi Livni, head of "HaTenu'a", for a joint list named the Zionist Union, ahead of the Knesset elections in 2015. The "Zionist Union" list won 24 seats in the Knesset and was the Israeli Labor Party's greatest achievement since 1996.

He served as the opposition leader until he was unanimously elected by the Board of Trustees of the Jewish Agency to be the Chairman of the Jewish Agency in the summer of 2018.

**Miriam Peretz** - Born in Casablanca, Morocco. Miriam is an educator who lost two of her sons in the Israeli wars. Her husband sadly died after the death of his first son. Since then, she has been lecturing on the Jewish and Zionist heritage to Israeli soldiers, youth and Jewish communities in Israel and around the world.

Miriam spends much of her time visiting the homes of bereaved families and comforts them after the loss of loved ones. Following her work, she was honoured to light a torch at the Torch-Lighting Ceremony on Mount Herzl in 2014.

In 2018, she won the Israel Prize for Lifetime Achievement for her remarkable contribution to Israeli society.

Her moving speech at the Israel Prize ceremony resonated throughout Israeli society. Miriam Peretz became popular thanks to her sensitivity and warm attitude toward every Israeli and her ability to build bridges between different people.