

JMCC Public Opinion Poll No. 39 - Part Two

Four Months after the Beginning of the Palestinian Intifada: Attitudes of the Israeli and Palestinian Publics towards the Peace Process

in cooperation with The Steinmetz Center For Peace Research, Tel Aviv University
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Introduction

This report presents the main results of coordinated attitude surveys conducted during late December 2000 by the JMCC and the Steinmetz Center. Both surveys are based on interviews conducted with randomly selected people who represent the adult (over age 18) Palestinian (N= 1199) and Israeli (N=1004) populations. The Palestinian interviews were conducted face-to-face while the Israeli respondents were interviewed by telephone.

Overall, the results reveal large differences between the two publics with regard to their perceptions of who was responsible for the Palestinian uprising and its impact on the peace process. The two publics also differ sharply with respect to the nature of attitude change that has taken place in conjunction with the uprising.

Perceptions related to the Intifada:

Seventy-six percent of the Palestinians believe that Israel is responsible for the recent deterioration in the relations between the two nations, whereas in the Israeli-Jewish public, 61 percent put the blame on the Palestinians. Israeli Arabs are more similar to the Palestinians, although they have a more balanced view: 50 percent thinks that both sides are equally responsible and 40 percent believe that Israel is responsible.

A large majority of the Palestinians (69 percent) believe that the Intifada has increased the readiness of Israel to come closer to the Palestinians' demands, against 16 percent who think that the readiness has decreased. Among the Israelis the evaluations are in the opposite direction: 53 percent believe that the readiness of Israel has decreased, compared with 26 percent who think that it has increased. A similar contrast appears with regard to the beliefs about the impact of the Intifada on the chance for a peace agreement: 53 percent of the Palestinians think that the chance has increased compared with 31 percent who believe that it has decreased. Among the Israelis, 55 percent think that the chance decreased against 19 percent who believe that it decreased.

A huge gap between the two publics also appears in regard to the question of what is the most efficient way to reach a mutually acceptable agreement. For the large majority of Israelis (74 percent) the best way is through negotiations, with only 13 percent choosing confrontation, 5 percent preferring combination of both ways, and 4 percent who believe that it is impossible to reach an agreement. Among the Palestinians, only 22 percent believe in negotiations, while the rest are divided between those who prefer confrontations (25 percent) or combination of both (14 percent), and those who do not believe in the possibility of a peace agreement. This is perhaps one of the most significant differences between the two publics.

Attitudes before and after the beginning of the Intifada

Within the Palestinian public, the degree of optimism about reaching a peaceful Arab-Israeli settlement has sharply

decreased from 60 percent in December 1999 to 33 percent in December 2000, while the rate of pessimists went up from 37 percent to 62 percent. The optimism of the Israeli public has also declined, but more moderately: 54 percent were optimists in December 1999 and 48 percent in December 2000. The rates of pessimism went up from 40 percent to 48 percent. Among the Palestinians there has been during that time a small but significant decrease in the degree of support of the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations: In December 1999, 56 percent supported this process and 38 percent opposed it. To day, 46 percent support the negotiations and 52 percent are against them. Among the Israelis, on the other hand, the degree of support went up from 54 percent in December 1999 to 64 percent in June 2000, and has remained at exactly the same level in December 2000.

On the issue of an independent Palestinian state, there has been a large decrease in the percentage of Palestinians who believe that the Oslo process will eventually result in the establishment of such a state: In December 1999, 52 percent believed in this possibility and 44 percent didn't. In December 2000, the comparable figures were 29 percent and 68 percent, respectively. Among the Israelis, the percent of those who believe in this result also went down, but much more moderately. Moreover, in both periods, this percentage was much higher than among the Palestinians: 78 percent in December 1999 and 69 percent to day.

Finally, there have been considerable changes in the mutual perception of each side. While 20.5 percent of the Israelis perceived the Palestinians as violent in December 1999, this view went up to 46 percent to day. An even larger change in the same direction took place among the Palestinians: While 58 percent of them used to perceive Israelis as violent in December 1999, 87.5 percent of the Palestinians perceived them in the same ways in December 2000.

Methodology

A random sample of 1199 people over the age of 18 were interviewed face-to-face throughout the West Bank and Gaza Strip on 21-24 December 2000. The interviews were conducted in randomly selected homes, and the subjects inside each home were also selected randomly according to Kish tables. The interviews were conducted in 60 sampling points chosen randomly according to population.

In the **West Bank**, 759 people were surveyed from the following areas: **Jenin:** Jenin, Jenin refugee camp, Kafr Rai, Arraba, Yabad, a-Zababdeh, Meithalun, Aqaba, Sanur. **Nablus:** Nablus, Burqa, Beit Furik, Haris, Sabastiya, Balata refugee camp, Biddya, Burin. **Tulkarem:** Tulkarem, Ramin, Qalqiliya, Tulkarem refugee camp, Beit Lid, Jayous. **Hebron:** Hebron, Dura, Al-Fawwar refugee camp, Beit Umar, a-Taffuh, Yatta, Halhul, al-Dahiriya. **Bethlehem:** Bethlehem, Za'atara, Artas, Beit Sahour, Beit Tamir, Dheisheh Refugee Camp. **Jericho:** Jericho, Aqbet Jabber. **Ramallah & al-Bireh:** al-Bireh, Ramallah, Bir Zeit, al-Mazraa al-Sharqiya, Kharbatha Bani Harith, al-Amari refugee camp. **Jerusalem:** a-Ram, Kafr Aqab, Old City, Beit Hanina, Shufat, al-I'ssawia, Jabal al-Mukaber, Silwan, Sheikh Jarrah, Sawahreh.

In the **Gaza Strip**, 440 people were surveyed from: **Gaza North:** Jabalia refugee camp, Jabalia, Beit Lahia and Beit Hanoun. **Gaza:** Sheikh Radwan, a-Darji, a-Tufah, Sabra, a-Zeitoun, a-Nasser, a-Shujaieh, a-Rimal north and south and Shati refugee camp, Saftawi, a-Sha'af, Sheikh 'Ajleen. **Deir al-Balah:** al-bureij refugee camp, Deir al Balah, refugee camp, al-Maghazi refugee camp. **Khan Younis:** Khan younis, Khan Younis refugee camp, Bani Suheila, Absan al-Saghira, Absan al-Kabira, al-Qarara. **Rafah:** Rafah, Rafah refugee camp and Tal al-Sultan refugee camp.

The margin of error is 3 percent, with a confidence level of 95.

Sample Distribution

- 51.6% of the respondents were from West Bank, 11.7% from Jerusalem, 36.7% from the Gaza Strip.
- 30.5% said they live in villages, 16.7% in refugee camps, and 52.8% in towns/cities.
- 51.1% were male, 48.9% were female.
- The average age of the respondents was 34 years.

Occupation respondents

- Students 10.6% laborers 13.3% Farmers/fishermen 2.6%
 - Craftsmen 1.8% Businessmen/private business 7.7%
 - Employees e.g. secretaries/municipal employees/teachers/nurses 19.2%
 - Professionals - e.g. doctors/lawyers/ pharmacists/engineers 1.5%
 - Housewives 34.9% unemployed + retired 7.6%
 - No answer 0.8%
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Results

Q1. How optimistic or pessimistic are you about reaching a peaceful Arab-Israel settlement? Would you say you are?

	Israeli Total	Israeli Jews	Israeli Arab	Palestinian Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
	n= 1004	n=503	n=501	n=1199	n=759	n=440
Very optimistic	6.7	6.4	8.1	1.0	1.3	0.5
Optimistic	41.4	41.2	41.5	31.7	34.5	26.8
Pessimistic	39.3	40.0	37.6	37.9	34.0	44.5
Very pessimistic	8.8	8.5	10.4	24.3	23.3	25.9
I don't know	3.8	3.9	2.4	5.1	6.9	2.3

Q2. What do you think about the Israeli-Palestinian negotiation process, would you say strongly support it, support it, oppose it or strongly oppose it?

	Israeli Total	Israeli Jews	Israeli Arab	Palestinian Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
	n= 1004	n=503	n=501	n=1199	n=759	n=440
Strongly support	11.9	10.5	20.9	2.6	3.6	0.9
Support	51.7	51.5	55.2	43.2	45.2	39.8
Oppose	23.7	24.9	14.8	32.6	31.8	34.1
Strongly oppose	10.3	10.7	6.4	19.2	16.1	24.5
I don't Know	2.4	2.4	2.7	2.4	3.3	0.7

Q3. Do you believe or not believe that the Oslo agreement between Israel and the PLO will bring about peace between Israel and the Palestinians in the coming years?

	Israeli Total	Israeli Jews	Israeli Arab	Palestinian Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
	n= 1004	n=503	n=501	n=1199	n=759	n=440

Greatly believe	8.0	7.6	10.8	3.1	3.6	2.3
Somewhat believe	35.4	34.6	41.4	25.6	25.1	26.6
Somewhat don't believe	28.6	29.2	24.0	32.1	33.4	30.3
Certainly don't believe	22.3	23.3	16.3	35.5	33.1	39.1
I don't know	5.7	5.3	7.5	3.7	4.8	1.7

Q4. In your opinion, is there a chance that the Oslo Process will eventually result in the establishment of a genuine sovereign Palestinian state?

	Israeli Total	Israeli Jews	Israeli Arab	Palestinian Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
	n= 1004	n=503	n=501	n=1199	n=759	n=440
Surely yes	23.8	25.4	11.7	5.7	6.2	4.8
Probably yes	43.1	43.1	42.1	33.3	35.4	29.5
Probably no	15.9	16.1	15.3	18.2	18.2	18.2
Surely no	9.4	7.8	21.8	35.2	30.6	43.2
I don't know	7.8	7.6	9.1	7.6	9.6	4.3

Q5. Some argue that the Two States for the Two People formula is the preferable solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, while others argue that historic Palestine cannot be divided into two states and therefore a bi-national state in which the Israelis and the Palestinians will have equal representation in the various institutional of government regardless of the relative size of the two populations is the most preferable one. Which of the two solutions do you prefer?

	Israeli Total	Israeli Jews	Israeli Arab	Palestinian Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
	n= 1004	n=503	n=501	n=1199	n=759	n=440
Prefer the Two States solution	69.0	69.2	70.5	47.0	47.0	46.8
Prefer the bi-national solution	18.3	18.1	18.1	20.3	21.2	18.6
Prefer another solution	4.7	5.0	2.3	15.7	12.5	21.2
There is no solution to the conflict	4.1	4.2	4.0	10.9	11.7	9.5
I don't know	3.9	3.6	5.2	6.1	7.6	3.9

Q6. If the Israelis and the Palestinians sign a permanent peace agreement based on the "Two States for the Two People" formula. From the point of view of the Palestinians/Israelis, will such an agreement mean the end to their historical conflict with Israel/with the Palestinians?

	Israeli Total	Israeli Jews	Israeli Arab	Palestinian Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
	n= 1004	n=503	n=501	n=1199	n=759	n=440
Surely yes	11.2	9.7	21.9	3.6	4.7	1.6
Probably yes	34.9	34.8	33.4	21.6	22.8	19.6
Probably no	26.3	27.8	13.8	19.7	19.2	20.5
Surely no	20.5	20.9	22.0	48.3	44.1	55.5
I don't know	7.1	6.8	8.9	6.8	9.2	2.8

Q7. Now I am going to show you a list of characteristics that could be used to describe the Israelis (Palestinians), using the following scale (show scale 1-5), Please indicate how you describe the Israelis (Palestinians)?

Violent

	Israeli Total	Israeli Jews	Israeli Arab	Palestinian Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
	n= 1004	n=503	n=501	n=1199	n=759	n=440
Non-Violent	8.9	3.6	50.2	1.9	2.8	0.5
	6.1	5.2	13.6	1.6	2.2	0.5
In between	17.8	17.7	17.1	1.3	1.6	0.7
	16.4	17.5	9.4	6.9	7.5	5.9
Violent	46.2	51.5	6.6	87.5	85.1	91.6
I don't know	4.6	4.5	3.1	0.8	0.8	0.8

Honest

	Israeli Total	Israeli Jews	Israeli Arab	Palestinian Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
	n= 1004	n=503	n=501	n=1199	n=759	n=440
Dishonest	35.1	38.8	8.5	70.9	66.5	78.4
	11.9	12.7	4.6	10.9	13.2	7.0
In between	21.7	22.3	18.7	6.3	6.5	5.9
	10.4	9.5	14.3	3.0	4.1	1.1
Honest	14.4	10.5	45.5	7.8	8.6	6.6
I don't know	6.5	6.2	8.4	1.1	1.1	1.0

Strong

	Israeli Total	Israeli Jews	Israeli Arab	Palestinian Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
	n= 1004	n=503	n=501	n=1199	n=759	n=440
Weak	19.9	21.1	11.9	14.9	15.7	13.6
	13.2	13.9	7.8	8.3	7.1	10.5
In between	25.2	26.0	17.5	16.6	17.9	14.3
	15.0	15.3	11.1	16.3	16.1	16.8
Strong	20.8	17.7	46.6	42.8	42.2	43.9
I don't know	5.9	6.0	5.1	1.1	1.0	0.9

Q8. And now what about the situation of Palestinian (Israelis) economy, would you say that it is:

	Israeli Total	Israeli Jews	Israeli Arab	Palestinian Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
	n= 1004	n=503	n=501	n=1199	n=759	n=440
Very bad	25.4	22.7	47.3	62.2	59.4	67.0
Fairly bad	33.4	34.2	27.6	29.1	30.4	26.8
Fairly good	34.8	36.6	19.4	7.5	8.6	5.7
Very good	4.1	4.2	3.7	0.7	0.9	0.2
I don't know	2.3	2.3	2.0	0.5	0.7	0.3

Q9. (For the Palestinians) and what about the future of your economic situation with the achievement of a permanent peace will it:

	Israeli Total	Israeli Jews	Israeli Arab	Palestinian Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
	n= 1004	n=503	n=501	n=1199	n=759	n=440
Get better	51.2	47.7	78.5	47.0	47.7	45.7
Stay the same	34.4	37.4	12.9	27.0	26.0	28.9
Get worse	5.6	5.8	3.1	13.0	12.6	13.6
I don't know	8.8	9.1	5.5	13.0	13.7	11.8

Q10. Would you mind an Israeli (Palestinian) to be your friend?

	Israeli Total	Israeli Jews	Israeli Arab	Palestinian Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
	n= 1004	n=503	n=501	n=1199	n=759	n=440
yes	33.4	37.6	2.2	75.3	70.5	83.6
No	60.9	56.1	96.7	21.8	26.9	13.0
I don't know	5.7	6.5	1.1	2.9	2.6	3.4

Q10-1 In case a peace settlement is reached between the Palestinians and the Israelis in the future, will you keep on minding having an Israeli to be your friend?

	Israeli Total	Israeli Jews	Israeli Arab	Palestinian Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
	n= 1004	n=503	n=501	n=1199	n=759	n=440
Yes	69.6	70.3	8.2	82.1	77.2	89.1
No	13.5	13.5	5.4	15.5	19.6	9.5
I don't know	16.9	16.2	86.4	2.4	3.2	1.4

Q11. Who is more responsible for the recent deterioration in the Palestinian and Israeli relation? Would you say only the Israeli side, mostly the Israeli side, only the Palestinian side, mostly the Palestinian side, both sides are responsible to the same degree, neither side is responsible?

	Israeli Total	Israeli Jews	Israeli Arab	Palestinian Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
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	n= 1004	n=503	n=501	n=1199	n=759	n=440
Only the Palestinian side	27.9	31.2	4.4	2.8	4.0	0.9
Mostly the Palestinian side	26.5	29.8	1.4	3.1	4.1	1.4
Only the Israeli side	6.3	4.0	25.9	50.5	46.6	57.0
Mostly the Israeli side	5.5	4.2	13.6	25.4	26.6	23.4
Both sides are equally responsible to the same degree	29.4	26.6	50.0	15.8	15.8	15.7
I don't know	4.2	4.2	4.7	2.4	2.9	1.6

Q12. Which of the following ways is more efficient in order for the Palestinians and the Israelis to be able to reach a mutually acceptable agreement?

	Israeli Total	Israeli Jews	Israeli Arab	Palestinian Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
	n= 1004	n=503	n=501	n=1199	n=759	n=440
Negotiations	73.7	75.9	57.9	21.5	24.1	17.0
Confrontations	12.8	13.3	7.7	25.3	21.3	32.0
Combination of both	5.1	3.4	12.0	13.9	17.1	8.4
It is impossible to reach an agreement	5.3	4.4	18.8	36.3	34.0	40.2
I don't know	3.1	3.0	3.6	3.0	3.5	2.4

Q13. Do you believe that the Palestinian Intifada has increased or decreased the readiness of the Israelis to come closer to the Palestinians' demands in order to reach a peace agreement?

	Israeli Total	Israeli Jews	Israeli Arab	Palestinian Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
	n= 1004	n=503	n=501	n=1199	n=759	n=440
Increased	28.2	25.8	48.8	68.8	71.9	63.4
Decreased	50.4	52.5	33.1	15.8	10.7	24.8
Had no influence	14.5	15.5	7.8	9.1	11.5	5.0
I don't know	6.9	6.2	10.3	6.3	5.9	6.8

Q14. Looking on the consequences of the Palestinian Intifada up to this moment, do you believe that it has increased or decreased the chance for a peace agreement with Israel?

	Israeli Total	Israeli Jews	Israeli Arab	Palestinian Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
	n= 1004	n=503	n=501	n=1199	n=759	n=440
Increased	21.0	19.3	35.3	52.9	56.0	47.5
Decreased	54.5	55.3	46.8	31.2	25.0	41.8
Had no influence	17.3	18.5	8.9	8.8	11.5	4.3
I don't know	7.2	6.9	8.8	7.1	7.5	6.4