# JMCC Public Opinion Poll No. 33 Palestinian Attitudes Towards Politics - October 1999

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#### Introduction

JMCC's latest poll, conducted on October 21 -22, 1999, did not show any significant change in the support for the Palestinian-Israeli peace process; the poll also tackled the issue of confidence in local and Arab mass media and the performance of the Palestinian National Authority. The results can be summarized in the following main points:

#### 1- The Political Process:

- When compared with the results of last August polls, results show a consistency in Palestinians' support to the Palestinian-Israeli peace process, where it reached 58%.
- A majority of Palestinians (70.7%) are optimistic regarding the future in general.

### 2- The PNA Performance and Palestinian Factions:

- There is a significant increase in the popularity of President Yasser Arafat, where the Palestinians who trust the President rose from (28%) last August, prior to signing Sharm Sheikh Agreement, to (32%) in this poll.
- Regarding the performance of the PNA, there is a slight rise in ratio of Palestinians (63%) who are satisfied with the Authority performance compared with (58.8%) last August.
- Only half of the Palestinians surveyed view improvement in the feeling of self security under the PNA compared with (44.5%) who see their self-security feeling retreating or remaining the same.
- There is a slight decrease in the ratio of Palestinians who do not trust any political or religious figure from (41.3%) last August to reach (29.9%) in October 1999.
- On popularity of Fateh Movement, results show a rise from (28%) last August to (33.8%) this October.
- There is also an increase in Hamas popularity from (8.5%) in August to (11.1%) this October.

### 3- Mass Media:

- On the independence of the Palestinian media, a minority of the Palestinian people (20.1%) believes that the Palestinian press is independent; moreover, Palestinians surveyed said daily newspapers are more independent than the Radio and the television.
- There is a majority of Palestinians (73%) who believe that having an independent press is a vital need to promote democracy in Palestine while (81.1%) think that the press must have an impact on the government.

- The majority of Palestinians (64.6%) believe that the Palestinian media must be more open to the social and non-political issues.
- Among the TV stations surveyed, the Palestinian TV won the highest (although the figure is still low) ratings (19.8%) in terms of viewers, but the largest ratio of viewers (32.5%) trust the news brought by Al-Jazeera Satellite Channel.
- The majority of Palestinians included in the sample listen to the Israeli Radio (19.8%); however, the ratio of Palestinians who trust the news broadcast by Voice of Palestine is higher (19.8%).
- Regarding newspapers, Jerusalemite Al-Quds daily newspaper got the highest ratings in terms of readers (45.3%) and the highest ratio of confidence (43.3%).

### Methodology

A random sample of 1200 people over the age of 18 were interviewed face-to-face throughout the West Bank and Gaza Strip on 21, 22 October 1999. 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 58 sampling points chosen randomly according to population.

In the West Bank, 762 people were surveyed from the following areas: Jenin: Jenin, Tubas, Jenin refugee camp, Kafr Rai, Arraba, Silat al-Harithiya. Nablus: Nablus, Salfit, Huwwara, Beit -Dajan, Deir Sharaf, Kafr al Deik, Burin, Askar refugee camp ¿Zawata. Tulkarem: Tulkarem, Tulkarem refugee camp, 'Anabta. Qalqiliya: Qalqiliya, Allar, Jayous. Hebron: Hebron, Sair, Beit - Ula, Bani N'aim, Dura, Samu', Tarqoumiya, al - Fawwar refugee camp. Bethlehem: Bethlehem, Nahalin, al - Doha, Husan, Azza refugee camp. Jericho: Jericho and 'Ein al - Sultan refugee camp. Ramallah & Jerusalem: al-Bireh, Jalazon refugee camp, Sinjil, Nilin, Silwad, Shuqba, Old City, al - Dahiya, al - Ram, al - Ezzariya, Abu Dis, Beit Hanina, Shu'fat, Bir Nabala, Qalandiya refugee camp, Kafr Aqab, 'Anata.

In the <u>Gaza Strip</u>, 438 people were surveyed from: **Gaza North:** Jabaliya refugee camp, Jabaliya, Beit Lahiya and Beit Hanoun. **Gaza**: Sheikh Radwan, a-Darj, a-Tufah, Sabra, al-Mighraqa, Zaytoun Nasir –Shouja'ia, a-Rimal north and south and Beach refugee camp. **Deir al-Balah:** Nuseirat refugee camp, Deir al-Balah refugee camp, Deir al-Balah. **Khan Younis:** Khan Younis, Khan Younis refugee camp, Khuza'ah, al-Qararah and Bani Suheila. **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**

- 57.2% of the respondents were from West Bank, 6.3% from Jerusalem, 36.5% from the Gaza Strip.
- 41.9% said they live in villages, 16.0% in refugee camps, 42.1% in towns/cities.
- 47.3% were male, 52.7% were female.
- 66.3% were married, 26.7%, single, 3.7% widowed, 1.4% divorced, 1.9% no answer.
- The average age of the respondents was 34 years.

# **Results**

# Q1. To what extent do you feel optimistic or pessimistic regarding the future in general? Would you say that you are very optimistic, optimistic, pessimistic or very pessimistic?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Very Optimistic	7.6	5.8	10.7
Optimistic	63.1	65.7	58.4
Pessimistic	19.9	20.6	18.8
Very Pessimistic	8.0	6.7	10.3
No answer	1.4	1.2	1.8

## Q2. In general, how do you feel about the Israeli - Palestinian peace process?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Strongly support	16.0	16.6	15.0
Somewhat support	42.0	45.1	36.8
Neither support nor oppose	21.8	21.9	21.5
Somewhat oppose	9.6	7.7	12.8
Strongly oppose	8.5	6.6	11.8
No answer	2.1	2.1	2.1

# Q3. In general, how do you evaluate the performance of the Palestinian National Authority?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Very good	7.2	6.4	8.9
Good	55.8	59.9	48.7
Bad	23.8	22.0	26.7
Very Bad	8.2	6.2	11.6
No answer	5.0	5.5	4.1

# Q4. Who is the Palestinian figure you trust the most?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Yasser Arafat	32.0	32.8	30.6
Ahmed Yassin	6.4	5.1	8.7
Haydar abdel - Shafi	5.4	3.8	8.2
Faisal al - Husseini	2.3	2.6	1.6
Hanan Ashrawi	2.5	2.6	2.3
Saeb Erekat	3.9	4.2	3.4
Other figures	8.8	9.0	8.7
I don't trust anybody	29.9	31.2	27.6

No answer	8.8	8.7	8.9

# Q5. Which political faction do you trust the most?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Fateh	33.8	35.0	31.5
Hamas	11.1	9.4	13.9
PFLP	1.3	1.3	1.4
Islamic Jihad	1.9	2.1	1.6
Other Islamic factions	2.9	3.4	2.1
Other factions	2.7	3.7	1.3
I don't trust anybody	34.1	33.3	35.4
No answer	12.2	11.8	12.8

# Q6. In general, how do you evaluate people's attitude towards the Peace Process?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
They support the Peace Process	33.8	36.2	29.6
They are hesitant in their attitudes	42.9	43.2	42.5
They oppose the Peace Process	18.0	16.0	21.5
No answer	5.3	4.6	6.4

# Q7. Since the beginning of the Peace Process, do you think that your feeling of self-security is better than it was before the Peace Process?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
It is better	53.5	48.6	62.1
It didn't change	28.2	32.7	20.3
It is worse	16.3	16.7	15.5
No answer	2.0	2.0	2.1

### Q8. Some people think that the Palestinian Press lacks independence; do you support or oppose this?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
The Palestinian Press is dependant	38.5	36.2	42.6
In between	26.5	26.8	26.0
The Palestinian Press is independent	20.1	20.7	18.9
I don't know	13.1	13.9	11.6
No answer	1.8	2.4	0.9

### Q9. Why do you think the Palestinian Press lacks independence?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Censorship and other effects from the Palestinian Authority.	11.7	14.3	7.4
Censorship and other effects from Israel.	13.0	17.4	5.7
Self censorship from the journalist himself.	1.1	1.0	1.1
Censorship from directors of Media means.	2.6	2.9	2.0
Restrictions from the society.	0.6	0.9	0.3
The level of Palestinian professional journalists is weak.	2.0	2.7	0.9
The financial capabilities of the Palestinian Press are weak.	2.6	2.9	2.0
All the mentioned above.	1.0	1.4	0.3
Censorship and other effects from the Palestinian Authority + Censorship and other effects from Israel.	13.8	14.8	12.0
Censorship and other effects from the Palestinian Authority + Censorship and other effects from Israel + The financial capabilities of the Palestinian Press is weak.	1.5	1.4	1.7
Censorship and other effects from the Palestinian Authority + Censorship and other effects from Israel + Censorship from directors of Media means.	2.0	1.5	2.8
Censorship and other effects from the Palestinian Authority + The level of Palestinian professional journalists are weak.	1.6	1.5	1.7
Censorship and other effects from the Palestinian Authority + The financial capabilities of the Palestinian Press are weak.	3.0	0.9	6.6
Censorship and other effects from Israel + The financial capabilities of the Palestinian Press are weak.	2.5	2.0	3.1
Censorship and other effects from the Palestinian Authority + Censorship and other effects from Israel + The level of the Palestinian professional journalists is weak.	2.5	1.9	3.4
Censorship and other effects from the Palestinian Authority + Censorship and other effects from Israel+ Self censorship from the journalist himself.	1.2	0.7	2.0
Censorship and other effects from Israel + Self censorship from the journalist himself.	1.3	1.2	1.4
Censorship and other effects from the Palestinian Authority+ Censorship from directors of Media means.	3.2	1.7	5.7
Censorship and other effects from Israel+ Censorship from directors of Media means.	1.0	0.9	1.1
Censorship and other effects from Israel+ The level of the Palestinian professional journalists is weak	1.2	1.0	1.4
Censorship and other effects from the Palestinian Authority+ Censorship from directors of Media means+ The financial capabilities of the Palestinian Press is weak.	1.3	0.2	3.1
Others	12.2	9.1	18.3
No answer	17.1	17.7	16.0

# Q10. In your opinion, which of the following Palestinian media means is more independent?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
TV	17.4	22.3	8.9
Radio	12.6	17.2	4.6
Daily Newspapers	20.2	24.8	12.1
There isn't	3.5	4.9	1.1

Others	0.3	0.4	0.2
I don't know/ No answer	46.0	30.4	73.1

# Q11. Among all TV channels, radio stations, and daily newspapers, could you mention the name of the channel, station, and newspaper, that you think is more independent, you trust more, and those you watch, listen, or read most?

TV channel most independent	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Al Jazeera	32.8	33.2	32.0
Israel	8.7	8.0	9.8
MBC	5.1	6.4	2.7
Egypt	2.5	1.7	3.9
Jordan	7.3	8.5	5.0
Palestine	13.6	12.1	16.2
CNN	1.4	0.9	2.3
Watan	2.2	2.4	1.8
ANN	1.4	0.7	2.7
LBC	1.6	1.3	2.1
Future	1.1	0.9	1.4
Abu Dhabi	1.6	0.9	2.7
Al - Amal	1.3	1.6	0.9
No channel	1.3	1.4	0.9
Others	6.4	8.8	3.0
No answer	11.7	11.2	12.6

TV channel you trust most	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Al - Jazeera	32.5	32.3	32.9
Israel	6.6	6.0	7.5
MBC	6.0	7.1	4.1
Palestine	16.5	15.5	18.3
Nablus	1.3	2.0	0.2
Jordan	7.0	8.7	4.1
CNN	1.7	1.8	1.4
Watan	2.1	2.4	1.6
ANN	1.2	0.8	1.8
Abu Dhabi	1.7	0.5	3.7

Future	1.0	0.9	1.1
Egypt	2.3	1.0	4.3
No channel	2.7	2.5	3.0
Others	5.8	7.0	4.4
No answer	11.6	11.5	11.6

TV channel you watch most	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
MBC	7.8	8.4	6.6
Al - Jazeera	19.5	20.5	17.8
Jordan	11.3	15.2	4.3
Future	1.8	1.8	1.6
Watan	2.6	3.0	1.8
ART	2.0	1.0	3.7
Palestine	19.8	14.8	28.5
Israel	4.8	5.0	4.3
Syria	1.6	2.5	0.0
Nile	1.3	2.0	0.0
Abu Dhabi	1.9	1.3	3.0
Al - Amal	1.8	2.2	1.1
LBC	1.6	0.9	2.7
Al - Salam	1.0	1.6	0.0
Egypt	6.3	3.5	11.2
Others	6.9	7.9	6.1
No answer	8.0	8.4	7.3

Radio Station most independent	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Palestine	15.8	20.2	8.0
Israel	19.8	22.7	14.6
Love and Peace	1.4	2.1	0.2
Monte Carlo	10.5	10.4	10.7
Middle East	2.2	0.8	4.6
Amwaj	2.3	3.1	0.9
Jordan	3.2	5.0	0.0
Al - Kur'an al - Kareem	1.9	1.2	3.2
Bethlehem	1.0	1.3	0.5
London	10.4	5.8	18.5
Sawt al - 'Arab	2.2	1.4	3.4
No station	3.4	3.9	2.5

Others	4.1	3.3	5.7
No answer	21.8	18.8	27.2

Radio station you trust most	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Palestine	19.8	24.8	11.0
Israel	14.5	14.6	14.4
Love and Peace	1.0	1.6	0.0
Monte Carlo	11.6	11.3	12.1
Ammwaj	1.5	2.5	0.0
Jordan	3.7	5.8	0.0
Al - Kur'an al - Kareem	1.5	0.8	2.7
Middle East	2.0	0.8	4.1
London	11.8	8.3	17.8
Sawt al - 'Arab	1.1	0.3	2.5
Syria	1.3	1.6	0.7
Voice of America	1.3	0.8	2.1
No station	3.7	4.2	2.7
Others	3.4	3.4	3.4
No answer	21.8	19.2	26.5

Radio station you listen most	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Palestine	17.8	23.0	8.7
Love and Peace	3.9	5.2	1.6
Amwwaj	3.8	5.5	0.7
Israel	19.8	20.5	18.5
Monte Carlo	7.1	7.7	5.9
Jordan	5.0	7.5	0.7
Al - Kur'an al - Kareem	2.0	0.9	3.9
Bethlehem	1.3	2.0	0.2
Egypt	1.6	1.2	2.3
Middle East	4.0	0.7	9.8
London	8.1	5.9	11.9
Sawt al - 'Arab	1.5	0.7	3.0
Syria	1.0	0.7	1.6
Voice of America	1.3	1.0	1.8

No station	1.7	1.0	2.7
Others	2.3	2.5	2.3
No answer	17.8	14.0	24.4

Daily Newspapers most independent	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Al - Ayyam	18.0	17.5	18.9
Al - Quds	45.4	49.5	38.4
Al-Risalah	1.1	0.4	2.3
Al-Hayah	6.3	6.4	5.9
No newspaper	2.2	2.5	1.6
Others	1.2	1.1	1.4
No answer	25.8	22.6	31.5

Daily Newspapers you trust most	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Al - Ayyam	17.6	16.0	20.3
Al - Quds	43.3	48.0	35.2
Al - Hayah	7.1	8.1	5.3
No newspaper	2.9	2.9	3.0
Others	2.0	1.9	2.2
No answer	27.1	23.1	34.0

Daily newspapers you read most	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Al - Ayyam	19.3	15.9	25.3
Al - Quds	45.3	52.2	33.3
Al - Hayah	11.2	9.7	13.7
Kul al - 'Arab	1.0	0.5	1.8
No newspaper	1.5	1.6	1.4
Others	0.9	0.7	1.2
No answer	20.8	19.4	23.3

# Q12. Do you think having an independent Press in Palestine is important to promote democracy in Palestine?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Very important	73.0	70.2	78.1
A little important	14.1	14.8	12.8
Not important at all	2.1	2.6	1.1
I have no opinion	2.8	2.6	3.0
I don't know	5.9	7.0	4.1
No answer	2.1	2.8	0.9

# Q13. Do you think that the Media has to play a role in affecting the government?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Yes	81.1	79.5	84.0
No	6.2	6.0	6.4
I don't know	10.8	11.7	9.1
No answer	1.9	2.8	0.5

# Q14. Do you think that the Palestinian Media must be more open when dealing with social and non-political subjects than it is now?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
The Palestinian Media must be more open when dealing with social issues	64.6	63.7	66.0
The current level is enough	20.2	20.6	19.4
The Palestinian Media must be less open when dealing with social issues	2.3	2.8	1.6
I don't know	10.2	11.2	8.4
No answer	2.7	1.7	4.6

# Q15. How often do you buy the Newspaper?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Almost everyday	27.8	32.3	19.8
At least once a week	22.2	22.6	21.5
At least once a month	7.8	8.7	6.2
I don't buy newspaper	21.2	21.5	21.0
I read newspapers others bought before	15.5	11.0	23.3
No answer	5.5	3.9	8.2

# Q16. How many hours do you spend on watching TV daily?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
At least one - two hours	38.9	42.9	32.0
At least two - four hours	29.4	30.2	28.0
More than four hours	25.4	21.7	32.0
I don't watch TV	4.3	3.4	5.7
No answer	2.0	1.8	2.3

# Q17. When do you mostly listen to radio stations?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
In the morning (6 - 9)	28.8	34.0	19.6
At lunch time (11 - 12)	10.5	5.9	18.5
In the afternoon (3 - 6)	8.4	6.7	11.4
In the evening	17.2	13.1	24.2

In the morning (6 - 9) + In the evening	9.5	11.3	6.4
In the afternoon (3 - 6) + In the evening	1.1	1.3	0.7
In the morning $(6 - 9) + \text{Lunch time } (11 - 2)$	5.8	8.3	1.4
In the morning $(6 - 9) + \text{In the afternoon } (3 - 6)$	3.8	5.0	1.6
Lunch Time $(11-2)$ + In the evening	1.5	2.0	0.7
Others	1.8	2.0	1.8
No answer	11.6	10.4	13.7

# Q18. What resources do you use to know about Palestinian events?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
Arabic Satellite broadcast news (Al - Jazeera, MBC, ANN, Abu Dhabi)	30.1	27.8	34.2
Local surrounding stations (Palestine, Israel, Jordan, other special local stations)	34.9	40.2	25.6
Local daily newspapers (Al - Quds, Al - Ayyam, Al Hayah Al - Jadeeda)	13.3	12.9	13.9
Rumors and news which friends and work mates discuss	16.2	12.5	22.6
No answer	5.5	6.6	3.7

# Q19. In you opinion, what is the most difficult issue among the issues contained in Israeli-Palestinian negotiations, the most difficult for the parties to find opportunities to solve them. Please refer to the most difficult issue, then the next in the degree of difficulty and then the less difficult?

The most difficult issue	Total	West Bank	Gaza
The Palestinian State	14.1	16.3	10.3
Jerusalem	57.4	52.2	66.4
The borders	2.8	3.7	1.1
Refugees	8.5	9.3	7.1
Water	3.4	3.1	3.9
Settlements	9.8	11.3	7.3
No answer	4.0	4.1	3.9

The second most difficult issue	Total	West Bank	Gaza
The Palestinian State	13.7	10.4	19.5
Jerusalem	19.5	20.6	17.6
The borders	8.8	10.8	5.5
Refugees	27.4	26.5	29.0
Water	6.8	6.5	7.1
Settlements	18.8	20.5	15.8
No answer	5.0	4.7	5.5

The third most difficult issue	Total	West Bank	Gaza
The Palestinian State	9.5	9.4	9.5
Jerusalem	9.1	11.4	5.3
The borders	12.2	14.8	7.5
Refugees	23.0	23.9	21.5
Water	11.2	9.7	13.7
Settlements	26.9	24.8	30.6
No answer	8.1	6.0	11.9

# Q20. From the issues mentioned previously, which are the three most important issues for both parties to reach an agreeable solution about it?

The most important issue	Total	West Bank	Gaza
The Palestinian State	15.8	18.0	11.9
Jerusalem	51.0	48.7	55.0
The borders	4.8	6.0	2.5
Refugees	9.3	9.2	9.4
Water	5.5	4.5	7.3
Settlements	10.4	11.0	9.4
No answer	3.2	2.6	4.5

The second most important issue	Total	West Bank	Gaza
The Palestinian State	11.3	10.0	13.7
Jerusalem	19.9	21.0	18.0
The borders	11.6	13.5	8.2
Refugees	26.3	24.7	29.2
Water	8.1	7.6	8.9
Settlements	17.7	19.7	14.2
No answer	5.1	3.5	7.8

The third most important issue	Total	West Bank	Gaza
The Palestinian State	12.0	12.2	11.6
Jerusalem	8.7	10.6	5.3
The borders	12.4	14.3	9.1
Refugees	22.6	24.8	18.7
Water	11.0	9.6	13.5
Settlements	26.3	24.3	29.7

No answer	7.0	4.2	12.1
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# Q21. At first glance, what is the cause of the problem of the refugees of 1948?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
Basically, the refugees left voluntarily.	4.0	4.5	3.2
Basically, Arab leaders urged the refugees to leave.	5.9	6.2	5.5
Basically, the Jewish Forces expelled the refugees	59.0	56.4	63.5
More than one answer (basically, Arab leaders urged the refugees to leave + Basically, the Jewish forces expelled the refugees)	15.4	18.2	10.5
Basically, the refugees left voluntarily + Basically, the Jewish forces expelled the refugees.	5.8	5.0	7.1
I don't know	3.3	4.1	2.1
Other	4.9	4.3	5.8
No answer	1.7	1.3	2.3

# Q22. What is the fairest solution to the refugee issue from among the following solutions?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
The solution must be based on UN Resolution 194 which calls for the right of return for all Palestinian refugees and compensation for those who do not return	81.7	81.1	82.6
The return of a limited number of Palestinian refugees to Israel and the appropriate compensation for those who do not return, which would be agreed upon by Israel and the Palestinians	11.0	10.4	12.2
Should allow only to those who are agreed upon by Israel to return and compensation for those who do not return.	2.9	3.5	1.8
There is no problem of refugees	0.3	0.5	0.0
No answer	4.1	4.5	3.4

# Q23. In the light of current circumstances, which of the solutions mentioned above (in q22) do you consider feasible?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
The solution must be based on UN Resolution 194 which calls for the right of return for all	63.6	66.8	58.0

Palestinian refugees and compensation for those who do not return			
The return of a limited number of Palestinian refugees to Israel and the appropriate compensation for those who do not return, which would be agreed upon by Israel and the Palestinians	18.8	15.7	24.2
Should allow only to those who are agreed upon by Israel to return and compensation for those who do not return.	6.4	6.6	6.2
There is no problem of refugees	0.4	0.5	0.2
No answer	10.8	10.4	11.4

# Q24. What is the number of refugees who should be allowed to return?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
No one should be allowed to return	1.3	1.6	0.6
A few hundreds of them should be allowed to return	3.1	3.5	2.3
A few thousands of them should be allowed to return	10.8	12.1	8.7
Anyone who wishes to return should be given the chance.	79.6	77.7	82.9
No answer	5.2	5.1	5.5

# Q25. Where should the resettlement of Palestinian refugees on a permanent basis be?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
Basically, in their original homes inside Israel,	53.8	53.2	54.9
Basically, in places within the Palestinian state.	29.7	30.3	28.5
Basically, in places of current residence in the Middle East or anywhere.	7.3	7.6	6.8
I don't know	7.8	7.5	8.2
No answer	1.4	1.4	1.6