

# JMCC Public Opinion Poll No. 21

## On Palestinian Attitudes Towards Current Issues

### July 1997

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#### Introduction

- In general, JMCC's July polls showed a further decline in support for the peace process, the Oslo agreements, the Palestinian Authority, President Arafat, and the Palestinian Legislative Council. Although, in general, the changes fall within the margin of error, it remains a change to the negative. In the case of people's attitude towards Arafat's performance, however, the drop was beyond the margin of error.
- The level of pessimism about the future has increased by 3.3% since last May, from 22.5% to 25.7%.
- When asked how their opinion has changed in comparison with last year on the peace process and Oslo 7.1% of the people surveyed said their opinion of the peace process worsened (compared to 7.5% improved), while 65.2% said that their opinion worsened on Oslo (compared 4.3% improved). Similar trends appeared regarding opinions on the Palestinian Legislative Council, opposition groups, Fatah and Hamas, although less extreme.
- More specifically, strong support for the Oslo agreements dropped 19.7% in December 1996 to 8.2% today. Opposition to the agreements increased to 30.4% compared to 19.1% last December.
- The percentage of people rating President Arafat's overall performance as "good" dropped from 53.8% last May to 49.5%. In actuality, this drop could be translated into a loss of more than 75000 supporters. This drop was evident in the Gaza Strip than in the West Bank. Those who rated Arafat's performance as "good" in Gaza dropped from 67.1% in May to 59.5% in July; in the West Bank there was a decline from 46% in May to 43.8% in July.

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#### Methodology

A random sample of 1,197 Palestinians, over the age of 18 years, were interviewed throughout the West Bank and Gaza Strip on 3 and 4 July 1997. The interviews were conducted on 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, 750 people were surveyed from the following areas: **Jerusalem:** Old city, a-Ram, Dhahyat al-Barid, Shu'fat, Shu'fat Refugee Camp (RC), 'Izzaria, Abu Dees, al-'Issawia, Silwan, Wadi al-Joz, Shiekh Jarrah, Ras al-Amoud. **Bethlehem:** Bethlehem, Beit Jala, Beit Sahour, Dihisheh RC, al-'ibeideih, Nahaleen. **Hebron:** Hebron, al-Aroub RC, Halhoul, Daharia, Yatta, Tarqoumia. **Jenin:** Jenin, Jenin RC, 'Arabeh, Kufr Rai, Qabatia, Ya'bad, Kufr Jamal. **Tulkarem:** Tulkarem, Tuklarem RC, Beit Leed, Irtah & Jayous. **Nablus:** Nablus, Beit Fouriq, Balata RC, Beit Fureek, Jama'een, Zeita, Burqa, Huwara. **Ramallah:** Ramallah, Al-Bireh, Ramoun, Turmus 'Aya, Kufr Ni'meh. **Jericho:** Jericho.

In the Gaza Strip, 447 people were surveyed from: Gaza City, al-Shati RC, Khan Younis, al-Amal Neighbourhood, Maghazi RC, Rafah RC, Yabta, Deir al-Balah RC, Deir al-Balah, Beit Hanoun, Beit Lahya, al-Breji RC, Shaboura Shuja'ieh, Jabalia, Khan Younis RC, Nusierat RC, al-Rimal, Gaza al-Tufah, Gaza al-Daraj.

The major of error is plus or minus 3% with a confidence level of 95%.

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## Sample Distribution

- 55.1% of the respondents were from the West Bank
- 36.7% from the Gaza Strip
- 8.2% from Jerusalem
- 32.5% said they live in villages
- 22.6% in refugee camps
- 44.9% in towns/cities
- 47.2% were male
- 52.8% were female
- 66.3% were married
- 27.1% were single
- 4.5% were widowed
- 1.2% were divorced
- 0.9% No answer
- The average of age of the respondents was 33.5 years.

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## Occupation respondents

- Students 13.4%
- Waged laborers 10.6%
- Housewives 37.2%
- Employees e.g. secretaries/teachers/nurses/municipal employees 16.5%
- Businessmen/private business 8.8%
- Farmers/fishermen 1.8%
- Craftsmen 1.8%
- Professionals - e.g. doctors/lawyers/pharmacists/engineers 2.2%
- Unemployed 5.1%
- Retired 1.8%
- No answer 0.8%

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## Results

**Q1. In general, to what extent would you say you are optimistic about the future in general? Would you say you are very optimistic, optimistic, pessimistic, or very pessimistic?**

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Very optimistic	6.7%	6.1%	7.7%
Optimistic	60.1%	57.0%	65.4%
Pessimistic	25.7%	29.3%	19.6%

Very Pessimistic	6.9%	6.9%	7.1%
No answer	0.6%	0.7%	0.2%

**Q2. In general, do you support or oppose the current peace process between the Palestinians and Israel? Do you strongly support, somewhat support, strongly oppose or somewhat oppose?**

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Strongly support	22.3%	21.4%	23.9%
Somewhat support	46.4%	44.9%	49.2%
Strongly oppose	13.6%	14.2%	12.5%
Somewhat oppose	12.9%	13.9%	11.4%
No answer	4.8%	5.6%	3.0%

**Q3. Which Palestinian political or religious faction do you trust most?**

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Fateh	34.8%	34.8%	34.9%
Hamas	11.3%	11.1%	11.6%
Islamic Jihad	2.6%	2.0%	3.6%
PFLP	3.1%	3.7%	2.1%
DFLP	0.8%	1.3%	0.0%
PPP	0.8%	1.1%	0.5%
FIDA	0.7%	0.8%	0.5%
Other Islamic Organization	2.3%	2.6%	1.6%
Others	1.0%	1.1%	1.0%
Do not trust anyone	31.2%	30.3%	32.6%
No answer	11.4%	11.2%	11.6%

**Q4. Which Palestinian political or religious personality do you trust most?**

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Yasser Arafat	37.6%	34.6%	42.8%
Ahmed Yassin	6.7%	6.2%	7.5%
Hadidar Abdul Shafi	3.7%	3.8%	3.4%
Hanan Ashrawi	2.6%	3.3%	1.4%
George Habash	2.5%	2.9%	1.8%
Sa'eb Erekat	1.8%	2.0%	1.4%
Faisal Husseini	0.9%	1.2%	0.5%
Abu Mazen	0.8%	1.2%	0.2%

Nayef Hawatmeh	0.6%	0.7%	0.5%
Others	8.9%	7.2%	11.4%
Do not trust anyone	24.2%	26.9%	19.6%
No answer	9.7%	10.0%	9.5%

**Q5. In general, how would you rate the overall performance of the Palestinian Authority? Would you say that its performance has been very good, good, bad, or very bad?**

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Very good	7.7%	7.0%	8.9%
Good	59.7%	61.3%	56.9%
Bad	21.7%	21.1%	22.8%
Very bad	7.4%	7.0%	8.0%
No answer	3.5%	3.6%	3.4%

**Q6. In general, how would you rate the overall performance of the Palestinian President Yasser Arafat? Would you say that his performance has been good, average, or bad?**

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Good	49.5%	43.8%	59.5%
Average	33.0%	35.5%	28.7%
Bad	12.8%	15.6%	8.0%
No answer	4.7%	5.1%	3.8%

**Q7. In general, how would you rate the overall of the Palestinian Legislative Council? Would you say that its performance has been very good, good, bad, or very bad?**

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Very good	4.4%	4.6%	4.1%
Good	42.3%	43.7%	39.9%
Bad	29.7%	29.6%	30.1%
Very bad	13.4%	10.6%	18.2%
No answer	10.2%	11.5%	7.7%

**Q8. Now that the Oslo agreements fro the transitional period have been implemented for some time, to what extent you support or oppose these agreements?**

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Strongly support	8.2%	7.4%	9.6%
Cautiously support	54.2%	55.4%	52.2%

Do not support	30.4%	29.9%	31.2%
No answer	7.2%	7.3%	7.0%

**Q9. How has your opinion of the following changed in comparison with last year? Has it improved, worsened or remained the same as last year?**

#### **Total**

	Yasser Arafat	Security forces	Peace Process	Oslo	PLC	PNA	Palestinian opposition	Fateh	Hamas	Hadidar Abdul Shafi
Improved	42.0%	36.3%	7.5%	4.3%	18.0%	31.7%	15.5%	24.8%	17.8%	16.4%
Worsened	14.5%	29.7%	71.0%	65.2%	34.6%	28.4%	27.8%	25.5%	27.1%	11.8%
Remained the same as last year	37.4%	24.6%	16.6%	21.0%	33.9%	32.7%	40.8%	37.0%	39.0%	38.8%
I do not know	4.3%	7.5%	3.7%	8.1%	11.9%	5.4%	13.0%	10.2%	13.2%	28.7%
No answer	1.8%	1.9%	1.2%	1.4%	1.6%	1.8%	2.9%	2.5%	2.9%	4.3%

#### **West Bank**

	Yasser Arafat	Security forces	Peace Process	Oslo	PLC	PNA	Palestinian opposition	Fateh	Hamas	Hadidar Abdul Shafi
Improved	34.4%	34.7%	6.9%	4.0%	17.3%	31.9%	12.7%	24.5%	14.8%	12.7%
Worsened	17.2%	29.2%	72.6%	65.7%	34.6%	29.7%	31.7%	26.6%	29.7%	12.4%
Remained the same as last year	40.9%	24.9%	14.9%	19.9%	32.6%	30.6%	38.1%	34.7%	38.1%	38.5%
I do not know	5.4%	9.2%	4.4%	9.1%	13.9%	6.2%	15.2%	11.6%	14.4%	31.3%
No answer	2.1%	2.0%	1.2%	1.3%	1.6%	1.6%	2.3%	2.6%	3.0%	5.1%

#### **Gaza Strip**

	Yasser Arafat	Security forces	Peace Process	Oslo	PLC	PNA	Palestinian opposition	Fateh	Hamas	Hadidar Abdul Shafi
Improved	55.1%	39.2%	8.7%	4.8%	19.4%	31.2%	20.3%	25.3%	23.0%	22.8%
Worsened	9.8%	30.8%	68.3%	64.5%	34.6%	26.2%	21.2%	23.5%	22.6%	10.7%
Remained the same as last year	31.4%	23.9%	19.6%	22.8%	36.2%	36.2%	45.3%	41.0%	40.5%	39.2%
I do not know	2.3%	4.6%	2.5%	6.4%	7.7%	4.1%	9.3%	7.7%	11.2%	24.1%

No answer	1.4%	1.5%	0.9%	1.5%	2.1%	2.3%	3.9%	2.5%	2.7%	3.2%
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**Q10. Some think that the level of corruption in the Palestinian Authority is high, others think that there is corruption but it is not widespread while others think there isn't any corruption. What do you think?**

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
There is a great deal	44.9%	42.0%	49.9%
There is corruption but not widespread	40.7%	40.9%	40.3%
There is hardly any at all	6.6%	7.9%	4.3%
No answer	7.8%	9.2%	5.5%