
Poll no. 53 – December 18-20, 2004

**Poll Result On Palestinian Attitudes Towards
The Palestinian Political Issues**

Significant Opinion results

- When Palestinians were asked to choose among the seven candidates running officially in the presidential elections, Fatah candidate Mahmoud Abbas stands out with 42.5% of the votes without any real challenge from the rest of the candidates. A ratio of 22.8 per cent said they will not vote for anyone while 13.6% of the Palestinians have not decided yet.
- A majority of the Palestinians still support the continuation of the Aqsa Intifada in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, but there is a general declining trend in this support.
- The poll shows an increase in support to the popular characteristics of the current Intifada with decrease in support to the continuation of both its popular and military characteristics.
- The poll shows Fatah Movement receiving the highest level of trust reaching 41.6% with Hamas Movement in second rank with only 20% support.
- Palestinians are divided almost equally on the way the new Palestinian leadership is leading the PA affairs.
- There is an increase in ratio of Palestinians who believe there will be a change in the political positions of the new Palestinian leadership after the death of President Arafat.
- The poll shows a slight increase in level of optimism among the Palestinians regarding the future in general.
- A ratio of 26.2% of Palestinians trusts most Mahmoud Abbas; however, 25.4% of the Palestinians trust no one. When asked who is the most trusted figure to the lead the Palestinian people after the departure of President Arafat, a ratio of 36.7 per cent chose Mahmoud Abbas is the figure.

Peace Process:

There has been an ascending trend in optimism among the Palestinians regarding the future in general. The majority of Palestinians, 63.3 percent, feel optimistic or very optimistic regarding the future in general compared with 59.3 percent at the beginning of this month and 45.3 percent last June. Meanwhile, 36.2 percent feel pessimistic or very pessimistic compared with 40.2 percent at the start of this month and 54.5 percent last June.

A majority, 63.1 percent, still supports the continuation of the Aqsa Intifada; however, there seems to be a steady declining trend in this support when compared with 69.7 percent in June 2004, and as high as 76.8 percent in October 2003.

The poll results show a major decrease in support to the continuation of both popular and military forms of the Intifada from 53 percent in April 2003 to 35.8 percent this month. A ratio of 31.8 percent of the Palestinians supports the continuation of the popular characteristics of the Intifada compared with 23.7 percent in April 2003 while those supporting the military characteristics of the Intifada rose from 11.2 percent in April 2003 to 20.2 percent this December.

Trust in Figures and Factions:

In JMCC open-ended trend question about the Palestinian figure they trust most, Mahmoud Abbas got the highest level of support, 26.2 percent showing a slight increase when compared with 21.9 percent at the beginning of this month. Marwan Barghouthi ranked second with 9.8 percent showing a decrease when compared with 15.0 percent in the poll conducted on December 8, 2004. A ratio of 25.4 percent said they trust no one.

In JMCC open-ended trend question with regard to Palestinian factions, Fateh was considered the most trusted faction, 41.6 percent.

The Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas was chosen by 20.0 percent.

Political situation after the departure of President Arafat:

In an open ended question When asked about the Palestinian figure they trust most to lead the Palestinian people after the departure of President Arafat, the highest percentage, 36.7 percent, said they trust Mahmoud Abbas, compared with 27 percent at the beginning of this month. Marwan Barghouthi came in third place going down from 20.1 percent earlier this month to 8.9 percent in this poll. And of those interviewed, 24.7 percent of the Palestinians said they trust nobody.

Most of the Palestinians, 67.0 percent, said they want to vote in the coming presidential elections. A ratio of 22.8 percent said they will not participate in the presidential elections. A ratio of 10.2 percent said they have not decided yet.

Concerning the impression of the Palestinian people about the way the Palestinian leadership is leading the PA affairs, 42.8 percent assessed the leadership performance as either very good or good; however, 46.6 percent said the performance is either bad or very bad.

A majority of the Palestinians, 56.9 percent, said they expect a change in political positions of the new Palestinian leadership after President Arafat's departure, while 37.0 percent of the Palestinians said they expect the same positions with no changes.

Methodology

A random sample of 1199 people over the age of 18 were interviewed face-to-face throughout the West Bank and Gaza Strip between 18 and 20 December 2004. 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 59 sampling points chosen randomly according to population.

In the **West Bank** 759 people were surveyed from the following areas: **Jenin:** Jenin, Silat al-Thahr, Rummana, Jablaboun, Tubas, Jenin RC. **Nablus:** Nablus, Beit-Dajan, Beit Imrin, Till, Marda, Ein Beit Ilma RC. **Tulkarem and Qalqilya:** Tulkarem, Illar, Qalqilya, Nur-Shams RC, Bal'a, Azzoun. **Hebron:** Taffuh, Nuba, Hebron, Dura, Yatta, Halhul, Idthna, al-Fawwar RC. **Bethlehem:** Bethlehem, Duha, al-Khader, Artas, Ayda RC. **Jericho:** Jericho, Aqabt Jaber RC. **Ramallah & al-Bireh:** Ramallah, Sinjil, Beit-Liqya, Abboud, al-Bireh, al-'Amari RC. **Jerusalem:** Old City, al-Dahieh, Anata, Beit Hanina, Beit Hanina Tahta, al-Isawieh, al-Thuri, Wadi al-Joz, al-Ram, Anata RC.

In the **Gaza Strip:** 440 people were surveyed from: **Gaza:** Shati RC, al Zaytoun, Sabra, al-Durj, a-Shuja'ia, al-Rimal north, al-Rimal South, Sheikh Radwan, al-nasser, al-Tuffah. **Khan Younis:** al-Khuza', Khan Younis, Bani Suheila, Khan Younis RC, al-Qararah. **Rafah:** Rafah, Tal al-Sultan RC, Rafah RC. **Gaza North:** Jabalia, Jabalia RC, Beit Hanoun. **Deir al-Balah:** Deir al-Balah, al-Maghazi RC, al-Bureij RC, al-Nusseirat RC.

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.

27.9% said they live in villages, 16.7% in refugee camps, and 55.4% in towns/cities.

49.2% were male, 50.8% were female.

66.1% were married, 23.9%, single, 3.2% widowed, 2.4% divorced, 4.4% no answer.

The average age of the respondents was 34 years.

Occupation of Respondents

Students 12.2%
laborers 11.3%,
Farmers/fishermen 3.9 %
Craftsmen 1.9%
Businessmen/private
business 6.4%
Employees e.g.
secretaries/municipal
employees/teachers/nurses
16.8%

Professionals - e.g.
doctors/lawyers/
pharmacists/engineers
1.8%
Housewives 36.1%,
Unemployed 8.9%
Retired 0.6%,
No answer 0.1%.

Results:

Q1. In general how optimistic or pessimistic do you feel towards the future?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	N= 1199	N= 759	N= 440
Very optimistic	6.8	6.5	7.3
Optimistic	56.5	52.4	63.4
Pessimistic	20.4	19.9	21.1
Very Pessimistic	15.8	20.7	7.3
No answer	0.5	0.5	0.9

Q2. Do you strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose the continuation of the al-Aqsa Intifada in the West Bank and Gaza Strip?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	N= 1199	N= 759	N= 440
Strongly support	23.8	20.9	28.6
Somewhat support	39.3	38.7	40.2
Somewhat oppose	22.6	24.2	19.8
Strongly oppose	12.6	13.8	10.5
No answer	1.7	2.4	0.9

Q3. The current Intifada includes popular characteristics such as the demonstrations and military characteristics. In your opinion, do you support the continuation of a popular or military Intifada or both of them together?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	N= 1199	N= 759	N= 440
I am with the continuation of the popular characteristics	31.8	33.5	28.9
I am with the continuation of the military characteristics	20.2	25.0	11.8
I am with the continuation of the popular and military characteristics	35.8	29.1	47.3
Don't know	7.3	7.5	7.0
No answer	4.9	4.9	5.0

Q4. Which Palestinian personality do you trust the most ?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	N=1199	N=759	N=440
Mahmoud Abbas(Abu Mazen)	26.2	24.1	29.8
Marwan Barghouti	9.8	10.5	8.6
Mustafa Barghouti	6.0	5.5	6.8
Mahmoud a-Zahar	3.8	4.2	3.9
Yaser Arafat	3.3	4.1	3.4
Khaled Misha'al	2.3	2.5	1.8
Isamaeel Hanieh	2.1	2.1	1.8
Bassam a-Salhi	1.8	1.1	1.6
Haydar Abdl Shafi	1.1	0.8	1.1
Others	12.1	10.1	15.5
I don't trust anybody	25.4	27.1	22.5
No answer	6.1	7.9	3.2

**The question was open-ended*

Q5. Which Palestinian political or religious faction do you trust most?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	N= 1199	N=759	N=440
Fateh	41.6	42.3	40.5
Hamas	20.0	17.4	24.5
Islamic Jihad	3.8	2.9	5.5
PPP	2.6	3.3	1.4
PFLP	2.2	1.8	2.7

Al Aqsa brigades	0.2	0.0	0.5
Democratic front	1.0	0.8	1.4
FIDA	0.2	0.3	0.0
Other Islamic Factions	2.9	2.6	3.4
Others	0.6	0.8	0.2
I don't trust any Faction	19.7	22.8	14.3
No answer	5.2	5.0	5.6

**The questions was open-ended*

Q6. Which is the Palestinian figure you trust most to lead the Palestinian people after the departure of President Arafat?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	N=1199	N=759	N=440
Mahmoud Abbas	36.7	35.3	39.1
Mustafa Barghouthi	10.0	9.9	11.8
Marwan Barghouthi	8.9	9.0	7.3
Khaled Masha'al	2.0	2.5	2.5
Mahmoud a-Zahar	2.0	2.2	2.3
Bassam a- Salhi	1.9	1.7	1.4
Ismaeel Hanieh	1.1	0.4	1.1
Others	5.8	4.6	8.0
No one	24.7	25.8	22.7
No answer	6.9	8.6	3.8

**The questions was open-ended*

Q7. Do you want to participate in the coming presidential elections?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	N=1199	N=759	N=440
Yes	67.0	67.5	66.1
No	22.8	23.3	21.8
I did not take my decision yet	10.2	9.2	12.1

Q8. So far, there are seven candidates for the PNA president's post, who will you vote for?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	N=1199	N=759	N=440
Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen)	42.5	42.8	41.8
Mustafa Barghouthi	14.6	14.1	15.5
Bassam al Salahi	2.6	3.2	1.6
Taysir Khaled	1.8	2.2	1.1
Sayed Barkeh	0.9	0.5	1.6
Abdul Halim Al Ashqar	0.7	0.7	0.7
Abdul Karim Shbeir	0.5	0.3	0.9
I will not elect	22.8	23.3	21.8
Did not take a decision yet	13.6	12.9	15.0

** Names were mentioned in different order from one questionnaire to another*

Q9. Do you expect a change in the political positions of the new Palestinian leadership after the departure of President Arafat or do you expect the new leadership to keep the same positions?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	N=1199	N=759	N=440
I expect a change	56.9	57.8	55.2
I do not expect a change	37.0	34.8	40.9
No answer	6.1	7.4	3.9

Q10. What is your impression of the way that the new Palestinian leadership is running affairs of the Palestinian Authority so far?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	N= 1199	N=759	N=440

Very good	3.7	3.6	3.9
Good	39.1	34.8	46.6
Bad	24.7	21.9	29.5
Very bad	21.9	26.6	13.6
Don't know	9.5	12.4	4.5
No answer	1.1	0.7	1.9