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Result of Palestinian Public Opinion Polls
No. 12
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Background:

One hundred days have elapsed since Mahmoud Abbas was elected President of the Palestinian Authority. A period during which he was able to reach an agreement with the Palestinian factions to declare a truce with the Israelis, and to introduce some changes in the structure of the Palestinian security apparatuses; he issued an order to unify all security apparatuses reducing their number to three main bodies. Further, Abbas reopened several internal files in an attempt to apply the rule of law and to activate the judicious system.

On the other side of the Palestinian scene, the second stage of local councils elections which was conducted in 84 sites in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip was completed on May 5th, 2005. The elections resulted in the winning of the candidates of Hamas and Fateh in most locations; Hamas scored advancement in the Gaza Strip. As a result of these elections some officials in Fateh resigned due to their failure to achieve a victory for their movement in their elections sites.

Within this context of elections talks, the Legislative Council elections law is still not approved because of some disagreement among the members of the Legislative Council on the form of this law. While the Cairo dialogue among the representatives of Palestinian political factions resulted in passing a law on the basis of half for percentage representation and half for the circles; the majority of Legislative Council members insist on the principle of one third for percentage representation and two thirds for circles. There is a talk about a suggestion advocating a law based on percentage representation. It is worth mentioning here that the declared date of the Legislative Council elections is mid July.

* The Opinions represented in the results reflect those of the study; they do not represent by any means the opinion of An-Najah National University.



The Results:

Following are the results of the Twelfth Palestinian Public Opinion Poll conducted by the Center for Opinion Polls and Survey Studies at An-Najah National University during the period from May 11 to 13, 2005. **The University sponsors all polls conducted by its center.**

The Twelfth Poll undertakes several subjects which are basically concerned with the coming Legislative Council election, an assessment of the performance of the institution of the Palestinian Authority, the state of democracy and human rights in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, in addition to political sympathies and other issues.

The sample included 1360 persons whose age group is 18 years and above and who have the right to vote. The sample forms one per thousand from among the total number of Palestinian people of this age group. The enclosed questionnaire was distributed on 860 persons from the West Bank and 500 persons from the Gaza Strip. The sample was drawn randomly and the margin of error is about $\pm 3\%$. Still 1.3% of the members of the sample refused to answer the questionnaire.

Major Results:

- 40.3% from among respondents believe that the Legislative Council elections will be conducted in July of this year.
- 67.2% believe that Mahmoud Abbas is really concerned with conducting the LC elections on its announced date of mid July.
- 35.4 % from among respondents believe that the present LC members are really concerned with conducting the elections on its announced date in July.
- 63.6% do not know what the mixed election law means.
- 56.8% do not know what percentage representation means, and 44.9% do not know what dividing the country into circles for the LC elections means.
- In the coming LC elections 35.1% prefer dividing the country into circles according to governates; and 33.1% prefer to have the whole country as a single circle. While 12.4% prefer a mixed elections system based on half for circles and half for percentage representations, 5.4% prefer an elections system based on two-thirds for circles and one third for percentage representation.
- 80.3% from among respondents trust the members of the Central Elections Committee.
- 71.8% from among respondents will participate in the coming legislative elections and 14.5% have not decided yet.



- 4.0% from among respondents will reelect the same members of the present LC, and 22.1% will not vote for any of them.
- The characteristics that respondents see in the person they want to vote for in the coming LC elections are arranged as follows:

Being uncorrupted	91.29%
Educational qualifications	85.71%
Patriotic history	75.85%
Being religious	74.66%
Belongness to a party	57.54%
Male gender	51.03%
Economic situation	41.57%
Family belongness	36.89%
Place of habitation	36.74%
Female gender	32.38%
Kinship	31.49%
Being an LC ex-member.	25.69%

- The basic principle that will define the attitudes of voters in giving their vote to a candidate will be personal acquaintance with a percentage of 26.9%, followed by belongness to a party with a percentage of 26.5%.
- 25.9% from among respondents will vote for Fateh block in the coming LC elections, 20.9% will vote for Hamas, and 5.1% will vote for a block from among members of the Palestinian left.
- If the choice before the Palestinian voters in the LC elections were limited to a choice of two blocks, one representing the PLO and one representing Hamas, respondents who vote for the PLO were 44.9% and those who vote for Hamas were 37.7%.
- 29.2% from among respondents will not elect all or some members from the present LC members because of the abuse of public funds by members, 24.5% because of the appointment of their relatives in public positions, 30.2% because of being remote from the problems and worries of the people of the elections circle that they represent and 7.8% because these representatives have never visited the people in their circle since their election.
- The percentages of respondents who are satisfied of:
 - The Palestinian Presidential Institution 72.2%.
 - The Palestinian Government 67.5%.
 - The Palestinian Legislative Council 52.2%.
 - The Palestinian judicious system 60.5%.
 - The Palestinian security apparatuses 55.8%.



- From among respondents believe that President Mahmoud Abbas began practical and tangible steps in the following domains:

Unifying Palestinian security apparatuses	63.8%
Fighting corruption in public institutions	49.9%
Enforcing the rule of law	44.6%
Freeing prisoners	32.7%
Eliminating the chaotic use of arms	30.1%
Providing personal security for Palestinian people	29.0%
Protecting subjects of Palestinian resistance.	28.6%
Limiting mediations in appointments in public position	25.2%
Improving the economic situation	22.4%
Limiting poverty and unemployment	18.4%

- 26.8% from among respondents believe that the changes that President Abbas introduced are meant to be genuinely for reform, 18.3% believes that they are formal and useless procedures.
- 22.6% believe that the state of democracy in Palestine is good; 31.4% say it is bad.
- 26.5% say that the political system in Palestine is proceeding towards building a democratic system.
- 30.4% say that the political system in Palestine is proceeding towards respecting human rights.
- 22.1% from among respondents assess respects of human rights by the Palestinian Authority as “good”.
- 32.2% from among respondents assess respect of freedom of press by the Palestinian Authority as “good”.
- 47.1% from among respondent say that they are able to criticize the policies of the Palestinian Authority without fear.
- 45.6% from among respondents say that they express their political opinions without fear.
- 39.4% from among respondents believe that the Palestinian social system gives them the freedom to adopt any religion or thought they choose while 37.6% say the contrary.
- 76.5% from among respondents believe that the government’s expenditures on the education sector is not enough to meet the educational needs, and 73.3% believe that the expenditures on the health sector is also not enough and so is the expenditures on social welfare with a 71.2%.
- 87.4% from among respondents do not feel safe neither for themselves nor for their families and properties.
- 87.4% from among respondents support the teachers’ demands to improve their financial situation and 54.3% support strike as a form of struggle to achieve their demands.



- 41.0% from among respondents believe that the second stage of local councils elections was conducted in a democratic atmosphere.
- 42.7% from among respondents believe that voters relied on their choice of their candidates to the local council on the political affiliation to a party, 17.1% relied on the family dimension and 20.4% relied on the competence of the candidate.
- 22.4% from among respondents believe that the local council elections are a victory to tribalism and 66.6% believe that they are a victory to the parties.
- As for political affiliation respondents gave the following results:

People's Party	1.3%
Democratic Front	1.3%
Islamic Jihad	3.4%
Fateh	34.3%
Hamas	25.1%
Fida	0.4%
Popular Front	4.0%
Palestinian National Initiative	1.3%
Independent Nationalist	5.7%
Independent Islamist	5.7%
None of the above	17.1%
Others	0.7%



The General Results

Do you think that the coming Legislative Council elections will be conducted on its announced date, July of this year?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Yes	40.3	42.3	36.8
May be	38.5	37.0	41.2
No	15.2	15.6	14.6
No opinion/I do not know	6.0	5.1	7.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Do you believe that President Mahmoud Abbas is concerned with conducting the LC elections on its Announced date, July of this year?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Yes	67.2	71.6	59.6
No	21.5	20.1	23.8
No opinion/I don't know	11.3	8.3	16.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Do you believe that the present LC members are concerned with conducting LC elections on its announced day in the coming July?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Yes	35.4	42.9	22.6
No	54.2	48.4	64.2
No opinion/I don't know	10.4	8.2	13.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

There is a talk that the LC will pass a law for the LC elections on the basis of a mixed elections system. Do you know what a mixed elections system is?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Yes	30.4	23.6	42.2
No	63.6	74.3	45.2
No opinion/I don't know	6.0	2.1	12.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0



Do you have any idea about the elections system which is based on the percentage representation?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Yes	37.9	31.3	49.4
No	56.8	66.4	40.4
No opinion/I don't know	5.2	2.3	10.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Do you have any idea about the elections system which is based on dividing the country into elections circles?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Yes	49.9	47.4	54.2
No	44.9	50.2	35.8
No opinion/I don't know	5.1	2.3	10.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

If the LC elections are conducted, on what basis do you wish it to be conducted?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Dividing the country into circles according to the governates.	35.1	35.8	33.8
Having the whole country as a single elections circle.	33.1	38.6	23.6
Adopting an elections system divided equally between the percentage and the circle systems.	12.4	9.7	17.2
Adopting an elections system divided into one third percentage and two thirds circles.	5.4	4.7	6.6
I do not know/No opinion	14.0	11.3	18.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

The Central Elections Committee which will supervise the coming elections has been reformed. How do you assess your trust in this committee?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Very good	18.8	18.8	18.8
Good	35.3	39.4	28.2
I trust them	26.2	23.5	30.8
Bad	9.0	8.1	10.4
No opinion/I do not know	10.7	10.1	11.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0



Will you participate in the coming LC elections?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Yes	71.8	72.9	70.0
No	12.4	14.3	9.0
I haven't decided yet	14.5	12.1	18.6
No opinion/I do not know	1.3	0.7	2.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Whom do you vote for in the coming LC elections?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
The same members of the present Council	4.0	3.0	5.8
Some members of the present Council	21.7	12.6	37.4
I will not vote for any one of the present members of the Council	22.1	19.5	26.4
I will decide then	42.4	54.4	21.8
I will not participate in the elections	7.7	9.4	4.8
No opinion/ I do not know	2.1	1.0	3.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

What characteristics do you wish to see in the candidates that you will vote for in the coming LC elections?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Kinship	3.1485	2.8907	3.5920
Educational qualifications	8.5706	8.7744	8.2200
Belongness to a party	5.7537	5.3395	6.4660
Family belongness	3.6890	3.5233	3.9740
Patriotic history	7.5846	7.7349	7.3260
Being religious	7.4662	7.5267	7.3620
Place of habitation	3.6735	3.4209	4.1080
Economic situation	4.1574	3.8733	4.6460
Being an LC ex-member	2.5691	2.7942	2.1820
Male gender	5.1029	4.7337	5.7380
Female gender	3.2375	3.3291	3.0800
Being uncorrupted	9.1287	9.4163	8.6340



What is the thing that will make you decide to whom you give your vote in the coming LC elections?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Family belongness of the candidate	4.0	4.4	3.2
Belongness to a political party	26.5	23.3	32.2
Both political and family belongness	17.9	17.7	18.2
Personnel acquaintance with the candidate	26.9	27.9	25.2
Others	17.4	22.1	9.2
No opinion/ I do not know	7.4	7.4	12.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

To which of the following blocks do you give your vote?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
A block from independent nationalist members	7.6	8.0	6.8
A block from independent Islamist members	9.8	10.6	8.4
A block from Palestinian leftists	5.1	3.3	8.2
A Hamas block	20.9	17.8	26.2
A Fateh block	25.9	24.3	28.6
I haven't decided yet	22.1	17.9	12.2
I will not participate in the elections	6.3	6.3	6.2
I do not know/No opinion	2.4	1.9	3.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

If you are given a choice in the coming LC elections to choose between two blocks only, one representing the PLO and one representing Hamas, whom do you vote for?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
The PLO Block	44.9	42.4	49.2
Hamas Block	37.7	39.5	34.6
I do not know/ No opinion	17.4	18.0	16.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Will you vote for the same present members who represent your circle in the coming LC elections?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Yes, all of them	5.4	4.8	6.4
Yes, some of them	42.4	49.1	3.8
I will not vote for any one of them	52.3	46.2	62.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0



Why wouldn't you vote for the present members of LC? Choose the most important reason.

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Abusing public funds and using them to achieve personal gains.	29.2	29.2	29.1
Abusing their positions by appointing their relatives and friends in public positions without having the right to do so.	24.5	23.2	26.8
Being detached and remote from the problems and worries of the people in their elections circle.	30.2	31.9	27.2
Because these representatives never visited their circles since their elections.	7.8	8.7	6.2
Other -----	8.4	7.1	10.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

How do you evaluate the performance of the following Palestinian institutions since the election of President Mahmoud Abbas?

Total					
	Good	satisfied	bad	I don't know/No opinion	Total
The Presidential Institution	31.3	40.9	19.4	8.5	100.0
The Palestinian Government	27.2	40.3	27.8	4.7	100.0
The Legislative Council	17.1	35.1	42.0	5.8	100.0
The judicious system	26.0	34.5	30.7	8.8	100.0
The security apparatuses	22.3	33.5	40.6	3.7	100.0
West Bank					
	Good	satisfied	bad	I don't know/No opinion	Total
The Presidential Institution	36.5	39.5	14.7	9.3	100.0
The Palestinian Government	33.1	39.1	22.9	4.9	100.0
The Legislative Council	20.8	37.2	35.5	6.5	100.0
The judicious system	30.7	31.7	27.7	9.9	100.0
The security apparatuses	29.2	33.0	34.7	3.1	100.0
Gaza Strip					
	Good	satisfied	bad	I don't know/No opinion	Total
The Presidential Institution	22.2	43.2	27.6	7.0	100.0
The Palestinian Government	17.0	42.4	36.2	4.4	100.0
The Legislative Council	10.6	31.6	53.2	4.6	100.0
The judicious system	18.0	39.2	36.0	6.8	100.0
The security apparatuses	10.4	34.2	50.8	4.6	100.0



Do you think that the Palestinian President began practical and tangible steps towards achieving the following?

Total				
	Yes	No	I don't know/No opinion	Total
Fighting corruption in public institutions	49.9	42.5	7.6	100.0
Unifying Palestinian security apparatuses	63.8	30.3	6.0	100.0
Enforcing the rule of law	44.6	49.1	6.3	100.0
Putting an end to the chaotic use of arms in Palestinian streets	30.1	64.2	5.7	100.0
Releasing prisoners	32.7	61.8	5.5	100.0
Protecting the subjects of Palestinian resistance	28.6	64.6	6.8	100.0
Limiting mediations in appointments in public positions.	25.2	64.9	9.9	100.0
Providing personal security to Palestinian people	29.0	64.8	6.2	100.0
Improving the economic situation	22.4	71.6	6.0	100.0
Limiting poverty and unemployment	18.4	76.3	5.4	100.0
West Bank				
	Yes	No	I don't know/No opinion	Total
Fighting corruption in public institutions	54.7	38.5	6.9	100.0
Unifying Palestinian security apparatuses	68.6	25.9	5.5	100.0
Enforcing the rule of law	53.3	41.9	4.9	100.0
Putting an end to the chaotic use of arms in Palestinian streets	38.3	57.4	4.3	100.0
Releasing prisoners	40.3	57.4	2.2	100.0
Protecting the subjects of Palestinian resistance	30.7	65.2	4.1	100.0
Limiting mediations in appointments in public positions.	26.9	63.6	9.5	100.0
Providing personal security to Palestinian people	30.9	65.2	3.8	100.0
Improving the economic situation	24.3	72.6	3.1	100.0
Limiting poverty and unemployment	19.1	78.3	2.7	100.0
Gaza Strip				
	Yes	No	I don't know/No opinion	Total
Fighting corruption in public institutions	41.8	49.4	8.8	100.0
Unifying Palestinian security apparatuses	55.4	37.8	6.8	100.0
Enforcing the rule of law	29.6	61.6	8.8	100.0
Putting an end to the chaotic use of arms in Palestinian streets	16.0	75.8	8.2	100.0
Releasing prisoners	19.6	69.2	11.2	100.0
Protecting the subjects of Palestinian resistance	25.0	63.6	11.4	100.0
Limiting mediations in appointments in public positions.	22.4	67.0	10.6	100.0
Providing personal security to Palestinian people	25.8	64.0	10.2	100.0
Improving the economic situation	19.2	70.0	10.8	100.0
Limiting poverty and unemployment	17.2	72.8	10.0	100.0



Do you think that the changes that President Abu Mazen conducted are

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Genuinely for reform	26.8	30.9	19.8
Formal and useless	18.3	14.8	24.4
Partially to isolate some official from decision making	15.1	12.2	20.2
To please some foreign parties	32.1	34.3	28.4
I don not know/ No opinion	7.6	7.8	7.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

As for the state of democracy in Palestine, how do you see it?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Good	22.6	22.7	22.4
Fair	41.9	41.2	43.2
Bad	31.4	33.4	28.0
I don not know/ No opinion	4.1	2.8	6.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Do you think that the political system in Palestine is heading towards building a democratic system?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Yes	26.5	28.6	23.0
Partially	43.7	40.7	48.8
No	25.4	26.6	23.2
I don not know/ No opinion	4.4	4.1	5.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0



Do you think that the political system in Palestine is heading towards respecting human rights?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Yes	30.4	35.3	22.0
Partially	37.6	34.5	42.8
No	28.4	27.1	30.6
I don not know/ No opinion	3.6	3.0	4.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

How do you assess the respect paid to human rights by the Palestinian Authority?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Good	22.1	25.1	17.0
Fair	45.1	47.8	40.4
Bad	29.3	24.7	37.4
I don not know/ No opinion	3.5	2.4	5.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

How do you assess the respect paid to the freedom of press in Palestine by the Palestinian Authority?

	Total	West Bank	The Gaza Strip
Good	33.2	38.1	24.8
Fair	41.7	39.8	45.0
Bad	19.8	16.0	26.2
I don not know/ No opinion	5.3	6.0	4.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Can you criticize the policies of the Palestinian Authority without fear?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Yes	47.1	48.5	44.8
Partially	25.4	22.6	30.2
No	25.6	27.6	22.2
I don not know/ No opinion	1.9	1.4	2.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0



Do you feel that you have the freedom to express your opinion in general political issues without fear?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Yes	45.6	47.7	42.0
Partially	26.8	23.8	31.8
No	26.0	27.9	22.6
I don not know/ No opinion	1.7	0.6	3.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Do you think that the Palestinian social system gives you the freedom to adopt any religion or idea you choose?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Yes	39.4	47.4	26.6
Partially	19.3	15.8	25.2
No	39.6	34.2	43.6
I don not know/ No opinion	3.7	2.6	5.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Do you think that the government funds given to the following public sectors are enough to meet their needs?

Total				
	Yes	No	No opinion/I don't know	Total
Public education sector	18.5	76.5	5.0	100.0
Public health sector	21.1	73.3	5.6	100.0
Social welfare sector	18.9	71.2	9.9	100.0
West Bank				
	Yes	No	No opinion/I don't know	Total
Public education sector	16.9	79.2	4.0	100.0
Public health sector	19.9	75.7	4.4	100.0
Social welfare sector	18.3	73.3	8.5	100.0
Gaza Strip				
	Yes	No	I don't know/No opinion	Total
Public education sector	21.2	72.0	6.8	100.0
Public health sector	23.2	69.2	7.6	100.0
Social welfare sector	20.0	67.6	12.4	100.0



Under the current local security situation that we go through, do you feel that you, your family and properties are secure?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Yes	14.5	16.4	11.2
Partially	32.9	26.7	43.4
No	52.2	56.7	44.4
I don not know/ No opinion	0.4	0.1	1.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Do you support teachers' demands to improve their financial situation?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Yes	87.4	90.9	81.2
No	8.9	7.3	11.6
I don not know/ No opinion	3.8	1.7	7.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Do you support teachers' strike as a form of struggle to improve their conditions?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Yes	54.3	53.3	56.0
No	41.6	44.9	36.0
I don not know/ No opinion	4.1	1.9	8.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Do you see that the second stage of local councils elections was conducted in a democratic atmosphere?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Yes	41.0	42.3	38.6
Partially	32.5	31.2	34.8
No	18.5	17.8	19.8
I don not know/ No opinion	8.0	8.7	6.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0



In your opinion, on what did voters base their choice in the last local councils elections?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
On a party	42.7	36.9	52.8
On a family	17.1	24.3	4.8
Acquaintance with candidates	11.0	12.9	7.6
Competence (qualifications)	20.4	17.9	24.6
I don't know/ No opinion	8.8	8.0	10.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Do you see that the last local councils elections are considered a victory to:

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Political parties	66.6	60.9	76.4
Family distinctions / tribalism	22.4	29.7	9.8
I don't know/No opinion	11.0	9.4	13.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Which of the following political affiliations do you support?

PARTY	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
People's Party	1.3	1.3	1.2
Democratic Front	1.3	0.8	2.0
Islamic Jihad	3.4	2.3	5.0
Fateh	34.3	34.7	33.6
Hamas	25.1	24.1	26.8
Fida	0.4	0.3	0.6
Popular Front	4.0	3.4	5.0
Palestinian National Initiative	1.3	1.0	1.6
I am an independent nationalist	5.7	5.8	5.4
I am an independent Islamist	5.7	6.7	3.8
Non of the above	17.1	19.1	13.8
Others	0.7	0.5	1.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0