



مركز العالم العربي للبحوث والتنمية
Arab World for Research & Development

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Results of Public Opinion Poll among Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip

Press Release

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Data Collection Dates: November 27 to December 2, 2024

Sample Size: 704 face-to-face interviews with adult Palestinians (18 plus), including 421 in the West Bank and 283 in Gaza. The margin of error is equal to $\pm 3.7\%$.

Ramallah/Gaza – The Arab World for Research and Development (AWRAD) is proud to share the findings of its latest public opinion survey conducted from November 27 to December 2, 2024, across the West Bank and Gaza Strip. This comprehensive survey builds on three previous rounds conducted earlier in the year—May, August, and October 2024. It provides critical insights into pressing issues faced by Palestinians amidst the ongoing conflict, covering current living conditions, perceptions of security, access to essential services, and the humanitarian situation. The survey also examines opinions on pathways to end the conflict, reconstruction and recovery priorities, and expectations for the post-conflict period.

In addition, the survey evaluates public satisfaction with Palestinian leadership, including President Mahmoud Abbas and his government led by Dr. Mohammad Mustafa. It further explores preferences for presidential candidates, potential legislative election outcomes, and Palestinian perspectives on the recent election of Donald Trump as President of the United States. Notably, the survey began on the same day as the signing of a ceasefire agreement between Lebanon and Israel.

Key Findings

A Glimpse of Hope in Gaza Amid Rising Pessimism in the West Bank

The survey reveals a stark contrast in outlook between Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank. In Gaza, optimism about the future has significantly increased, with the percentage of respondents who believe that things in Palestine are heading in the wrong direction dropping from 84% in October to 60%. Meanwhile, in the West Bank, the opposite trend is evident, as this perception has risen sharply from 59% to 79%.

This divergence is further reflected in views on the future. Optimism among West Bank respondents continues to decline, falling from 53% in October to 47%. In Gaza, however, optimism has surged during the same period, increasing from 33% to 66%, marking a remarkable 23-point rise. These findings highlight the growing sense of hope among Gaza Palestinians, contrasting sharply with the deepening pessimism in the West Bank.

Economic and Security Concerns Diverge Between Regions

The increasing pessimism in the West Bank is largely tied to perceptions of deteriorating political, security, and economic prospects. A significant 82% of West Bank respondents report a decline in their economic conditions, while 88% express concerns that security conditions are currently much worse or somewhat worse than a year ago. Additionally, only 39% of West Bank respondents believe that the Israeli presence in Gaza will end within a few months, with the majority expecting it to last for a year or longer.

In contrast, Palestinians in Gaza are more hopeful about the potential for an end to the conflict. Encouraged by the November 27, 2024, ceasefire in Lebanon, 48% of Gaza respondents believe that Israeli presence in Gaza will end within a few months, compared to 39% among West Bank respondents. Gaza respondents also display greater enthusiasm for the possibility of holding Presidential and Parliamentary elections as a pathway forward, compared to their West Bank counterparts.

Meanwhile, Palestinians in the West Bank face a variety of pressing security threats to their livelihoods. A substantial 79% of respondents feel it is highly or somewhat likely that they will face such actions from the Israeli military, and 68% believe they are at risk of actions from Israeli settlers. Additionally, 52% of respondents fear losing their jobs or income, and 25% worry about becoming victims of crime. Concerns about the Palestinian Authority (PA) also persist, with 23% expressing fears of potential actions by the PA that could infringe on human rights and freedoms.

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Low Satisfaction with Leadership

Overall, only 29% of respondents are very or somewhat satisfied with the overall performance of President Mahmoud Abbas, while 71% express dissatisfaction. This dissatisfaction stems from several factors. For instance, only 21% of respondents are satisfied with President Abbas's role in providing a vision for the post-crisis period, whereas 76% are dissatisfied. Similarly, limited communication with the public is highlighted, with just 21% satisfied with the President's communication efforts and 77% dissatisfied. Additionally, only 23% approve of Abbas's participatory governance approach, while 73% express dissatisfaction. In the West Bank, satisfaction with the performance of Palestinian leadership remains lower than Gaza.

Satisfaction with the PA Government is similarly limited among West Bank respondents, with the highest approval ratings in infrastructure development, including roads, electricity, and water, where 35% express satisfaction, while 62% remain dissatisfied. Performance in providing social services, such as education and health, sees slightly lower satisfaction levels, with 34% satisfied and 65% dissatisfied. The lowest satisfaction rates are in economic growth and job creation, with only 12% expressing approval. Other areas, such as support for Area C (14% satisfied), support for Jerusalem (16%), and support for Gaza (18% satisfied), also draw minimal satisfaction.

This overall dissatisfaction is reinforced by the belief among 71% of West Bank respondents that PA representatives are "not available for citizens when they need them." Transparency is another major concern, with only 20% believing the PA Government is transparent in its decision-making to some extent, while 74% disagree.

When asked about key issues, respondents prioritized the provision of social services and supporting Palestinians in Gaza (20% each), and ensuring citizen security (17%) as their top concerns. Fighting corruption in government institutions was cited as the most pressing issue by 7% of respondents, while infrastructure was prioritized by 5%. Despite these concerns, only 38% of respondents say they are familiar with government policies addressing these issues, and just 25% feel their household priorities are reflected in the PA Government's decisions.

Humanitarian Conditions and Aid Distribution in Gaza

Humanitarian conditions in Gaza remain a critical concern for public opinion. A significant 58% of Gaza respondents are dissatisfied with the performance of international humanitarian agencies in providing necessary support and services, while 41% express satisfaction to varying degrees. Perceptions of fairness

play a major role in shaping these views, with 77% believing that aid distribution is unfair to varying degrees, compared to only 21% who consider it fair.

The largest share of respondents (39%) attribute issues in aid distribution to the actions of local community leaders and merchants, who are seen as controlling local markets and resources. To 31%, this problem is compounded by movement restrictions imposed by Israel, leading to shortages and uneven distribution of assistance. Furthermore, 21% of respondents blame local NGOs and other distribution organizations, while 7% hold international humanitarian organizations responsible.

The Palestinian Authority (PA) Government's performance in Gaza is viewed positively by only a minority. One-third of respondents express satisfaction with the government's efforts to represent Palestinian interests in international forums, while 53% are dissatisfied, and 14% are unsure. Similarly, only 21% are satisfied with the PA's provision of basic needs in Gaza, and just 20% approve of its efforts to end the ongoing war.

Despite mixed perceptions of the PA Government, the majority of Palestinians (73%) support a Palestinian-led governing arrangement in Gaza. Comparatively, 14% favor an international-led arrangement, and 7% support an Arab-led arrangement. Support for international or Arab-led governance is higher in Gaza, reaching 27% (20% and 7%, respectively).

Among Palestinian actors, 47% favor a national unity government as the best option for governance. Support for a PA-led government and a Hamas-led government is nearly equal, at 18% and 17%, respectively. Interestingly, Gaza respondents show higher support for a PA-led government (31%) compared to only 5% support for a Hamas-led government. In contrast, West Bank respondents show more support for Hamas-led governance (25%) than for PA-led governance (10%).

Overwhelming Support for Elections

Elections are widely seen as the best pathway to a future government, with strong support for both presidential (88%) and legislative (85%) elections. Support for presidential elections is particularly high in Gaza (93%) compared to the West Bank (84%).

In hypothetical three-way presidential races, the survey results are as follows:

- In a race between Marwan Barghouti (Fatah), Khaled Mashaal (Hamas), and Mustafa Barghouti (independent), Marwan Barghouti garners 45% support, followed by Mustafa Barghouti with 22%, and Khaled Mashaal with 10%. Notably, 23% of respondents would vote for others or abstain from answering.
- In a race between Mustafa Barghouti, Mohammad Dahlan, and Khaled Mashaal, Mustafa Barghouti leads with 37% support, followed by Dahlan with 23%, and Mashaal with 14%. Dahlan's support is predominantly in Gaza (48%), while it drops significantly in the West Bank (7%). Conversely, Mashaal has stronger support in the West Bank (19%) than in Gaza (6%). Mustafa Barghouti is more popular in the West Bank (46%) compared to Gaza (24%).
- In a race between Mustafa Barghouti, Mahmoud Abbas, and Khaled Mashaal, Mustafa Barghouti again leads with 39% support, followed by Abbas with 17% and Mashaal with 14%. Abbas's support is higher in Gaza (30%) compared to the West Bank (9%).

When asked about Fatah's key strengths, 44% of respondents view its role as the founder and keeper of the Palestinian Authority as its main strength. Meanwhile, 29% highlight its political agenda, and only 6% see its militant or resistance agenda as a strength. In contrast, 57% of respondents identify Hamas's militant or resistance agenda as its primary strength, while 20% point to its social and religious agenda, and 7% its political agenda.

Palestinian Views on the U.S. Presidential Election

A majority of Palestinian respondents (59%) report following the U.S. presidential election, while 41% indicate otherwise. Interest in the election is higher among Gaza Palestinians (63%) compared to those in the West Bank (56%). This interest is accompanied by significant expectations and hopes regarding the impact of the new Trump administration on the region.

A substantial 70% of respondents believe, to varying degrees, that Trump's election will contribute to achieving a ceasefire agreement in Gaza. Additionally, 65% think his presidency will help revive the peace process, and 46% believe it could lead to a just peace treaty between Palestinians and Israelis.

These expectations align with broader public support for negotiations as the preferred pathway to achieving an independent Palestinian state. Overall, 60% of respondents favor negotiations, while 11% support a non-violent popular uprising, and 20% advocate for an all-out militant confrontation. Notably, support for negotiations is much stronger in Gaza (77%) than in the West Bank (48%). Conversely, 26% of West Bank respondents favor militant confrontation, compared to only 11% in Gaza.

Survey Methodology

The Arab World for Research and Development (AWRAD) conducted this public opinion survey between November 27 and December 2, 2024, across the West Bank and Gaza Strip. This survey builds upon three previous rounds conducted in May, August, and October 2024. AWRAD's team carried out face-to-face interviews with a total of 704 Palestinians, including 421 in the West Bank and 283 in Gaza.

The fieldwork was conducted by a dedicated team of 32 specialized AWRAD enumerators using a systematic selection process to ensure a representative sample. For the West Bank, updated population data from the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) was used as the sampling framework. A systematic probability sampling method was employed to ensure randomness and representation.

In Gaza, the sample design accounted for significant demographic shifts caused by displacement due to the ongoing conflict. The selection process systematically covered all governorates, applying "soft quotas" to ensure proportional representation based on governorate of origin, age, gender, and education. The final sample was weighted to align with official population statistics.

To enhance the accuracy of sampling in Gaza, multiple data sources on population movement were analyzed, including publications by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and satellite imagery from UNOSAT. Each selected Enumeration Area (EA) was cross-checked against UNOSAT imagery, with independent estimates of tent coverage produced by AWRAD.

Comprehensive quality assurance measures were implemented throughout the fieldwork process. Direct field supervision covered 20% of the interviews, and callback validation of selected questions was conducted with 17% of the sample. Additional data quality control measures included monitoring the duration of interviews, verifying enumerator compliance with sampling protocols, and analyzing responses to key questions and demographic markers. The margin of error for this survey is $\pm 3.7\%$.

For more details and analysis, please visit www.awrad.org or contact the AWRAD team at awrad@awrad.org.