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|   | [Opinion Polls](http://home.birzeit.edu/dsp/opinionpolls/)Poll No. 15A Specialized Poll on the Proposed Palestinian Elections and Other Issues: Living Conditions, Evaluation of Government**[ Analysis of Results ] [** [**Detailed Results**](http://home.birzeit.edu/cds/opinionpolls/poll15/results.html) **] [** [**Sample Distribution**](http://home.birzeit.edu/cds/opinionpolls/poll15/sample.html) **] [** [**PDF Format**](http://home.birzeit.edu/cds/opinionpolls/poll15/poll15.pdf) **] [** [**In Arabic**](http://home.birzeit.edu/dsp/arabic/opinionpolls/poll15/) **]** Analysis of Results**First Part: Deterioration of living conditions in the Palestinian territories continues** - The monthly income of 38% of the Palestinian households surveyed is less than USD 160 including 9% with no source of income.- In general, the monthly income of 78% of surveyed Palestinian households is less than USD 385 (a daily average of USD 1.9 per capita for a household of 6.7 persons)- 38% of the surveyed described the economic situation of their households as bad or very bad, 44% described it as fair and 19% described the economic situation of their households as good or very good. **Second Part: Mixed evaluation for Qurei government and conditioned support for cease of operations** - 25% of the respondents evaluated the performance of the Prime Minister, Ahmad Qurei, as good, 30% as fair and another 30 % as weak.- 23% of the respondents evaluated Qurei government as good, 30% as fair and 33% of the surveyed evaluated it as weak.- A majority (67%) supports stopping operations against Israeli civilians; the approval of 51% of them was conditioned on Israeli approval to end violence against Palestinian civilians. In contrast, 29% of the surveyed opposed stoping operations. **Third Part: Attitude towards Palestinian elections** **1. Availability of information and knowledge on Palestinian elections**- The majority of the respondents (54%) declared that they do not follow the news on elections, while 46% of them do.- A majority (57%) prefers the Palestinian TV Channels as a means for obtaining news and information on the elections, 21% prefer radio and 9% prefer local newspapers.- About 74% of the surveyed obtain information on ongoing events from TV.- Also, the majority of the respondents (72%) declared that they do not have information on the mechanisms of voter registration for the forthcoming elections. - Moreover, information is not available for: * 78% of the respondents on the content of the Presidential Elections Law
* 77% of the respondents on the content of Legislative Elections Law
* 74% of the respondents on the content of the Local Governments Elections Law.

- In general, 60% of the surveyed declared that they intend to register for participation in the elections in case the process of registration starts. **2. High support for conducting elections and willingness to participate**- 57% of the respondents support conducting Presidential elections.- 60% support conducting Legislative elections.- The percentage of support for conducting Local Governments elections goes up to 69%.- As for the attitudes of the respondents regarding the participation in the elections, they were as follows: * 75% of the respondents intend to participate in the Presidential elections.
* 72% intend to participate in the Local Governments elections.
* 66% intend to participate in the Legislative elections.
* In case the opposition called for boycotting the elections, 63% of the surveyed said that they will not boycott the elections despite this call.
* 46% declared that they have participated in the presidential and legislative elections that took place in 1996, whereas 29 said that they were under the legal age (18) allowed for participation in the elections at that time.

**3. A majority believe that conducting elections is beneficial**- The respondents believed that the elections will: * Promote citizens' feelings of having a role in the community (82%)
* Promote the rule of the law (81%)
* Activate community participation (79%)
* Represent the marginalized groups (77%)
* Improve the situation of Palestinian women (77%)
* Achieve reform in the institutions of the Palestinian Authority (76%)
* Improve the social situations (75%)
* Improve the economic situation (75%)
* Reform the political system (74%)
* Promote democracy in Palestinian society (72%)
* Put an end to chaos (71%)
* Accelerate the establishment of the Palestinian State (62%)
* Make a change in the present Palestinian leadership (61%) A majority also believes that the elections may have a negative role represented in the following:
* Promote the dominance of the current Palestinian Authority - promote the status quo (66%)
* Impose political solutions on the Palestinians (58%)

**Fourth Part: Expected Voting Behavior** **1. Trend towards Change**- Attitudes in favor of "change" are prominent, as: * 49% will elect new members for the membership of the Legislative Council; less than 20% will re-elect the current members.
* 53% will elect new members for the local governments; less than 18% will re-elect the current members.

- As regards the expectations of the respondents on the fairness of the elections: 50% of them declared that it will be fair, whereas 34% declared that it will not be fair. **2. Honesty and transparency are the most important factors in the selection of candidates:** The most important factors that potential voters will use are associated with the ethics, programs, historical record and role of the candidates in the service of the society. Approximately 97% of the respondents said that honesty is important; more than 90% considered the role of the candidate in the service of the community, educational attainment, and economic and social program are important factors (as illustrated in the following table).

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| **Factors ranked by importance** |
| **Factors** | **Total (%)** | **West Bank (%)** | **Gaza Strip (%)** |
| Honesty of the candidate (transparency) | 97.1 | 96.9 | 97.4 |
| Role of candidate in the service of the community | 96.4 | 96.0 | 97.0 |
| Educational attainment of the candidate | 94.2 | 93.0 | 96.0 |
| Candidate’s economic program | 92.5 | 93.8 | 90.6 |
| Candidate’s social program  | 90.5 | 91.5 | 89.0 |
| Role of candidate in the national struggle | 86.9 | 86.7 | 87.3 |
| Degree of religiosity of the candidate | 85.8 | 81.6 | 92.0 |
| Position on political issues | 85.5 | 85.0 | 86.3 |
| Factional affiliation of the candidate | 45.9 | 45.1 | 47.1 |
| Financial situation of the candidate | 34.3 | 32.1 | 37.9 |
| Familial relation with the candidate | 23.4 | 21.0 | 27.0 |

- Asking the respondents about the most important factor in the list, 46% emphasized that it is honesty, followed by religiosity of the candidate (30%), role of the candidate in the service of te community (6%), educational attainment and candidate's role in the national struggle (5%) and the candidate's program for solving economic problems (4%). - The majority of the respondents (70%) declared that they will vote for competent candidates regardless of their political affiliation, whereas 24% declared that they will vote for competent candidates close to the PNA and 7% declared that they will vote for competent candidates close to the opposition. **3. Election decision is a personal decision as well as familial.**- The majority of the respondents (56%) declared that their vote will be their own personal decision; whereas 27% declared that while their decision is personal, they will consult with the members of their family. 17% declared that their decision will be based on an overall family decision.- Asking about the persons who will have the most influence on their selection of their favorite candidate, 45% declared that they will make their own decisions, 20% said that the husband will have the most influence, 15% said the the father, 5% one of the relatives and 4% said the sons, while 5% declared that their decision will be consistent with the view of their political party. Small percentages declared that they are influenced by community leaders, the mosque Imam or friends. **Fifth Part: The Election System** - 35% of the surveyed prefer a (mixed system) as an election system that may be adopted in the forthcoming Legislative Council elections, 32% prefer a (simple majority) system and 20% prefer a (proportional representation) system. - Concerning presidential elections, 45% of the surveyed prefer that the election of the president takes place directly by the people through obtaining the highest votes. In addition, 41% prefer that the president be directly elected by people provided that she-he obtains 50% + 1 of the vote, and 14% prefer that the president be directly elected by the Legislative Council members.- The majority of the respondents (61%) declared that they prefer a presidential political system in which the authority and powers are within the jurisdiction of the president of the State, whereas 39% of the surveyed prefer a parliamentary system in which the authority and powers are within the jurisdiction of the prime minister who is appointed by the Legislative Council. - The majority of the surveyed agreed that the legal ages for voting and candidancy for the various elections remain as they are approved in the laws without making any changes or amendments: age of the citizen eligible for voting is 18 years, eligible age for presidential candidacy is 35 years, eligible age for candidacy for Legislative Council membership is 30 years and the eligible age for candidacy for local government membership is 25 years. **Sixth Part: The Participation of Women in the Elections** The results indicate a decline in support for electing women especially in the legislative and municipal elections. About the 1996 elections, 75% of potential voters said that they were willing to vote for a woman candidate (compared with 61% at the present time). IN 1996, willingness to vote for a woman in the local council election was at 65% (compared with 52% at the present time). This poll has shown that 35% of Gaza sample are youth who have not participated in 1996 elections because they were below 18 years, compared to 25% in the West Bank. Realizing that women opportunities are not equivalent to men, more than 62% of the respondents support allocating seats for women (quota).

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| **Willingness to vote for women and support for quota** |
|   | **Total (%)** | **West Bank (%)** | **Gaza Strip (%)** |
|   | **Yes** | **No** | **Yes** | **No** | **Yes** | **No** |
| **In legislative elections** | 64.3 | 34.2 | 70.7 | 27.6 | 54.8 | 44.1 |
| **In local governments elections** | 51.5 | 46.5 | 56.2 | 41.2 | 44.6 | 54.4 |
| **In presidential elections** | 48.4 | 49.8 | 54.7 | 43.1 | 39.0 | 59.7 |
| **Support of woman candidate from the family for local government elections** | 44.8 | 52.3 | 52.3 | 44.5 | 33.8 | 63.9 |
| **Allocate seats for women in the PLC** | 65.3 | 31.7 | 69.2 | 28.1 | 59.6 | 36.9 |
| **Allocate seats for women in the local governments** | 61.8 | 35.2 | 65.5 | 31.5 | 56.4 | 40.6 |

**Seventh Part: Support of the Political Groups** - The majority (84%) declared that they are not members in any Political organization; while 16% declared that they are members.- The majority (80%) also declared that they are not members in any grass root organization (union, NGO, charitable organizations, etc.); 20% declared their membership in such groups.- 29% said that they will not vote for any of the proposed factions listed in the survey. - On the other hand, 38% declared that they are willing to elect a bloc formed by Fateh. This compared with 21% who are willing to elect a bloc formed by Hamas. The Palestinian (leftists factions) will only obtain 7% of the votes in case they enter the elections within separated blocs, whereas the Islamic Jihad will obtain 5% of the votes. - It is noticeable that support for Fateh has been declining in during the last three years, where it went down from 33% in August 2000 to 20% during October 2001. Support for Fateh has been picking up since that time, where it reached 30% during the months of July and October 2003. In contrast, support for Hamas has been on the rise, where it went up from 14% in August 200 to 21% in October 2001. More recently support for Hamas has been declining where it reached 14% in February 2003. The current survey asked respondents not to state their political support, but willingness to vote for a bloc in a presumed elections where they must choose from the specific list (as illustrated in the following tables).

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| **Support for Fateh and Hamas (2000 - 2003)** |
|   | **Aug-00** | **Nov-00** | **Feb-01** | **Jun-01** | **Oct-01** | **Feb-03**  | **Jul-03** | **Oct-03** |
| **Fateh** | 33% | 30% | 26% | 23% | 20% | 24% | 30% | 29% |
| **Hamas** | 14%      | 17% | 19% | 19% | 21% | 14% | 22% | 19% |

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