



BIRZEIT UNIVERSITY
Development Studies Programme

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28 April 2005

Press Release

Public Opinion Poll 21 (Part 2)

**Palestinian Legislative Election
Political Support
Presidential Election (post-election survey)**

Date of fieldwork: 21-23 April, 2005

Number of field researchers: 75

Margin of error (+ or -): 3%

Sample size: 1200 Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip

Number of locations in the sample: 75

- * **For further information or queries, contact team coordinator Dr. Nader Said or Polling coordinator Ayman Abdul Majeed at the listed address or through our website.**
- * **Many thanks go to our field researchers, and the International Republican Institute (IRI) for their support.**

Main Findings

- **84% support holding PLC election on its scheduled date (July 17, 2005), while 8% oppose.**
- **Over 73% said that they intend to participate in the upcoming election.**
- **68% of the respondents support an election system based on national lists and proportional representation.**
- **80% support the allocation of a specific quota to designate a percentage of seats for women in the PLC.**
- **About 48% of the respondents declared that they will vote for new fresh faces in the upcoming PLC election.**
- **Fateh receives 41% of the vote. Hamas receives 23% of the vote. Al Mubadara-PFLP bloc receives 7% of the vote. About 30% are undecided.**

Analysis of Results

Section 1: The upcoming legislative election

Plans are being made to hold an election for the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) in July 17, 2005. The following results show great support for these elections and a desire to participate.

1. The majority of respondents support holding PLC election on its scheduled date and declare intent to participate.

- 84% support holding PLC election on its due date (July 17, 2005), while 8% oppose.
- Over 73% say that they intend to participate in the upcoming election; 78% in Gaza compared with 70% in the West Bank.
- 8% of the respondents are still undecided about their participation.
- In contrast, 20% (15% in Gaza and 23% in the West bank) say that they will not participate.

2. **A majority supports a national proportional election system**

- 68% of the respondents support the proposal that states that the election system should be based on national lists and proportional representation. 25% oppose the proposal and 7% are undecided.

3. **A vast majority supports a quota for women in the PLC election**

- A little less than 80% support the allocation of a specific quota to designate a percentage of seats for women in the PLC. Support in the West Bank (82%) is higher than Gaza (74%). Women are more supportive of the quota (84%) than men (73%).
- Over 58% supported a quota to guarantee 30% or more seats in the PLC for women. In fact, the largest group of respondents (30%) supported the allocation of half of the seats for women. Another 10% supported a quota of 40%, 18% supported a quota of 30%, 19% supported 20%, and 23% supported 10% quota.
- It was noticeable that the percentage support for a women's quota had increased from 62% before the PLC approved a similar quota designating seats for women in the recent Local Council Elections, to 79% now. This might be due to an increase in the perceived success by citizens of the implementation of the quota during the last local council elections.

4. **Most respondents (48%) would like to vote for new candidates.**

- About 48% of the respondents declared that they will vote for new fresh faces in the upcoming PLC election; only 10% said that they will vote for the present members. In contrast, 42% felt that this issue is not relevant in their decision.

5. **Reputation and service to the community are most important in selecting a candidate**

The respondents were asked to evaluate 10 factors that might influence their selection of a candidate. These are the most important results:

- 96% indicated that the most important factor is a good reputation and no record of corruption. That was followed by service to the community and education with 92% believing that they are important.
- The role in the struggle and religiosity were ranked fifth and sixth in relative importance, receiving about 78%.
- Political affiliation of the candidate is not as important as the previous factors, receiving 54%
- The place of residence of the candidate and familial connection to the candidate were the least important factors

Table (1): Criteria for selection of candidates			
	Important %	To some extent important %	Not Important %
Good reputation / no corruption	96	2	2
Provided services	92	5	3
Educational attainment	92	5	3
Role in the struggle	78	11	11
Religiosity	78	9	13
Access to decision-making within the PNA	62	13	25
Political affiliation	54	16	30
Gender	44	15	41
The candidate must be from area of residence	31	12	57
The candidate must be a relative	15	8	77

6. Fateh receives the highest rate of support, Hamas follows.

If all political groups decided to run on their own, based on a proportional election system for the whole country, the following results come out:

- Fateh receives 41% of the vote.
- Hamas receives 23% of the vote.
- 24% are undecided (although they intend to participate); 5% will participate but will not vote for any of the lists provided in the poll.
- The PFLP will receive a little over 2%. Palestinian National Initiative (Al Mubadara), PPP, and DFLP will each receive 1.5%.
- The Fida, Nidal, Saeqa (Baath Group), Palestine Liberation Front, Arab Liberation Front, Popular Front – Public Leadership groups will each receive less than 0.3% of the vote (i.e., less than half percent). All of them together receive less than 1%.

In case of coalitions made up from various groups, the results for Fateh and Hamas do not change. The change is significant for a Palestinian National Initiative (Al Mubadara) - PFLP bloc.

- A Fateh bloc that also includes Nidal, Fida, PPP, and others (led by Marwan Bargouti and supported by Mahmoud Abbas) will still receive 41%.
- A Hamas bloc with other Islamists (led by Mahmoud Zahar and supported by Khaled Mishal) will receive 23% of the vote.
- Al Mubadara-PFLP bloc (led by Mustafa Bargouti and supported by Haidar Abdel Shafi and Ahmad Saadat) will receive about 7%. If they run separately, they will receive a combined total of 3.5%.

- These results can not be used to fully predict the outcome of the election in July, since nearly 30% are either undecided or they will not vote for any of these blocs. This (swing vote) might lead to significant changes in the current predictions.

Table (2): Vote Distribution between blocs

Bloc	Total %	West Bank %	Gaza %
Fateh bloc	41	43	37
Hamas bloc	23	20	27
Al Mubadara-PFLP bloc	7	9	4
Undecided	29	28	30

7. Perception of Bloc's Ability to Create Positive Change

Palestinians were polled on their views of the ability of each bloc to make positive change on the various areas of their life:

- The results show that a majority of Palestinians trusts Fateh to achieve better success in 4 areas of concern: progress in the peace negotiations (70%), national unity (57%), improvement in economic conditions (57%), and reform internal conditions (53%).
- Hamas got the highest vote of trust in the area of representation of the poor and marginalized with 58%, whereas Fateh received 35%.
- Hamas receives higher scores in Gaza than in the West Bank on all issues; while Fateh receives higher scores in the West Bank than Gaza.

Table (3): Perceived ability of the various groups to make change (%)

		Progress in the peace process	Represent the poor	Reform internal conditions	Achieve national unity	Improve living conditions
Fateh bloc	Total	70	35	53	57	57
	Wes Bank	72	39	58	60	59
	Gaza Strip	66	28	46	52	53
Hamas bloc	Total	25	58	41	36	38
	Wes Bank	22	54	35	32	35
	Gaza Strip	29	65	51	43	44
Al Mubadara-PFLP bloc	Total	5	7	6	7	5
	Wes Bank	6	7	7	8	6
	Gaza Strip	5	6	4	5	3

Section 2: Lessons from the Presidential Election

1. A majority believe that the January Presidential election was fair; variance in the opinions of those who participated and those who did not participate.

- Among those who voted and those who did not, the current poll reveals that 54% of the Palestinian public believes that the Presidential Election was fair; while 30% felt it was somewhat fair. Only 16% felt that was unfair.
- For those that actually voted in the Presidential election, as measured by a DSP election-day poll, 73% of the voters felt that the election was fair, while 22% felt it was fair to some extent and only 5% of the voters felt it was unfair.

- The current poll shows that respondents who did not participate in the election exhibit varying point of views compared to those who did participated. 63% of those who said that they participated now feel that the election was fair, compared with 37% of those who declared that they did not participate.

2. Reasons for non-participation are mostly non-political. Personal and logistical issues are important.

- 22% said that the reason for their non-participation is that they were busy on the day of the election.
- Another 17% said that they did not find an appropriate candidate for whom to vote.
- About 10% said that the presidential election will make no difference in their lives or the life of the community.
- 8% cited religious reasons for non-participation.
- 5% cited logistical problems such as not finding their names in the records or not being able to find their election center.
- 3% (mostly Jerusalem residents) cited fear of loss of rights such as social security that is provided by the Israeli government.
- Only 1% cited road blocks as the reason for their non-participation.
- West Bank respondents cited being busy, religion, road blocs, and fear of loss of rights as a primary reason more than Gazans. In contrast more Gaza respondents cited not being able to find proper candidates and the perception that election makes no difference.



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Annex 1

Results of Opinion Poll # 21

(Part 2)

Legislative Council Election

Presidential Election

Political Support

Date of Publication: 28/04/2005

Field Research: 21-23/04/2005

Sample size: 1200 Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza

Number of sampling localities: 75

Margin of error: $\pm 3\%$

Section One: Presidential Election (9/1/2005)

	Total %	West Bank %	Gaza Strip %
1. Do you believe that the presidential election that took place in January 2005 were ..?			
1) Fair	53.7	52.0	56.4
2) Fair to some extent	29.9	31.8	26.9
3) Unfair	16.4	16.2	16.7
2. If you did not participate in the presidential election, what is the most important factor that led to your non-participation?			
1) I wanted to participate but I was busy	21.8	25.4	16.5
2) No convincing candidates ran	17.1	15.4	19.8
3) Because this election makes no difference	9.8	8.6	11.6
4) Because elections are prohibited by religion	8.4	12.8	1.9
5) Logistical problems (my name wasn't listed ...etc)	5.2	5.4	5.0
6) My political group called for a boycott	3.4	2.5	4.6
7) The road blocks erected by the Israeli occupation forces	3.0	5.0	0.0
8) I didn't have enough information on the election or the candidate	2.7	1.7	4.3
9) Fear of losing social security and/or Jerusalem Identification card	2.5	4.2	0.0

Section Two: Legislative Council Election

3. Do you support the conduct of legislative election on its scheduled date (July 17, 2005)?			
1) Support	84.1	81.7	88.0
2) Oppose	10.2	11.3	8.4
3) No opinion	5.7	6.9	3.6
4. Do you intend to participate in the upcoming legislative elections?			
1) Yes	72.7	69.7	77.6
2) No	19.7	22.8	14.5
3) Undecided	7.6	7.5	7.8
5. If election took place today, and the following groups ran for election, which one of them would you vote for?			
1) Fateh	41.1	42.1	39.7
2) I will participate, but I have not decided yet.	23.6	24.3	22.6
3) Hamas	22.6	20.4	26.0
4) Popular Front	2.1	2.0	2.3
5) People's Party	1.5	2.2	0.4
6) Democratic Front	1.4	1.9	0.8
7) Al Mubadara (Palestinian National Initiative)	1.4	1.7	0.9
8) I will participate, but I will not vote for any of the above	5.4	4.5	6.7

	Total %	West Bank %	Gaza Strip %
6. If the following blocs ran for legislative election, which one would you vote for?			
1) A bloc formed by Fateh with PPP, Fida, Nidal, and others, led by Marwan Barghouti and supported by Mahmoud Abbas.	40.7	42.9	37.4
2) A bloc formed by Hamas and other Islamists led by Mahmoud Zahar and supported by Khaled Mash'al	22.9	19.9	27.4
3) A bloc formed by Al Mubadara and the PFLP, led by Mustafa Barghouti and supported by Haidar Abdel Shafi and Ahmad Sa'adat	6.7	8.7	3.9
4) I will participate, but I have not decided yet	24.4	23.9	25.2
5) I will participate, but I will not vote for any of the above	5.2	4.6	6.2
7. Which one of the following blocs is more qualified to achieve the following?			
Progress in the peace process			
1) Fateh bloc	69.6	71.9	66.0
2) Hamas bloc	24.9	22.3	29.1
3) Mubadara/PFL bloc	5.5	5.8	4.9
Achieve national unity			
1) Fateh bloc	57.2	60.2	52.1
2) Hamas bloc	36.1	32.0	42.9
3) Mubadara/PFL bloc	6.7	7.8	4.9
Improve living conditions			
1) Fateh bloc	56.8	59.3	52.6
2) Hamas bloc	38.4	34.8	44.2
3) Mubadara/PFL bloc	4.9	5.9	3.2
Reform internal conditions			
1) Fateh bloc	53.2	57.7	45.9
2) Hamas bloc	40.8	35.0	50.5
3) Mubadara/PFL bloc	6.0	7.4	3.7
Represent the poor			
1) Fateh bloc	35.0	39.1	28.3
2) Hamas bloc	58.1	53.6	65.3
3) Mubadara/PFL bloc	6.9	7.3	6.4
8. Do you support or oppose an election system based entirely on national blocs and proportional representation?			
1) Support	67.5	63.7	73.8
2) Oppose	24.8	27.9	19.6
3) No opinion	7.7	8.4	6.7
9. Do you support the allocation of a specific quota for women within legislative council?			
1) Yes	78.6	81.6	73.7
2) No	21.4	18.4	26.3

	Total %	West Bank %	Gaza Strip %
10. How much should the quota for women be?			
1) 10%	23.1	22.5	24.1
2) 20%	19.2	19.5	18.8
3) 30%	17.9	18.4	17.0
4) 40%	9.8	10.3	8.9
5) 50%	30.0	29.3	31.2
11. When voting for the legislative council, I prefer to vote for:			
1) New candidates (who are not current members)	48.1	46.0	51.6
2) Current members	10.0	10.3	9.6
3) This will not influence my decision	41.9	43.7	38.8
12. When voting, which of the following factors is most important in selecting your candidate?			
Good reputation / no corruption			
1) Important	95.6	93.7	98.8
2) To some extent important	1.9	2.5	0.8
3) Not Important	2.5	3.8	0.4
Educational attainment			
1) Important	92.3	91.0	94.4
2) To some extent important	4.7	5.6	3.4
3) Not Important	2.9	3.4	2.1
Provided services			
1) Important	92.0	90.5	94.5
2) To some extent important	4.6	5.3	3.6
3) Not Important	3.3	4.2	1.9
Religiosity			
1) Important	78.4	73.7	85.9
2) To some extent important	8.8	10.8	5.6
3) Not Important	12.8	15.3	8.5
Role in the struggle			
1) Important	77.9	77.2	79.1
2) To some extent important	11.2	12.9	8.5
3) Not Important	10.9	9.9	12.5
Access to decision-making within the PNA			
1) Important	61.6	62.3	60.5
2) To some extent important	13.1	14.7	10.5
3) Less Important	25.3	22.9	29.1
Political affiliation			
1) Important	53.6	52.5	55.2
2) To some extent important	16.5	18.0	14.1
3) Not Important	29.9	29.4	30.7

	Total %	West Bank %	Gaza Strip %
Gender			
1) Important	44.1	39.2	52.2
2) To some extent important	15.1	17.7	10.8
3) Not Important	40.8	43.1	37.1
The candidate must be from area of residence			
1) Important	31.3	30.6	32.4
2) To some extent important	12.0	12.5	11.1
3) Not Important	56.7	56.9	56.5
The candidate must be a relative			
1) Important	14.9	13.3	17.4
2) To some extent important	8.5	9.3	7.1
3) Not Important	76.7	77.5	75.4

Annex 2: Sample distribution

Region	%	Type of locality	%	Refugee Status	%
West Bank	62.1	City	39.4	Refugee	45.1
Gaza Strip	37.9	Village- town	38.5	Non-refugee	54.9
Governorate	%	Camp	22.0	Sector	%
Jenin	6.5	Gender	%	Private sector	73.7
Tubas	1.2	Male	50.3	N.G.O.'s	3.0
Tulkarm	4.1	Female	49.7	Public Sector	23.3
Nablus	10.3			Education	%
Qalqilya	2.3	Marital status	%	Illiterate	20.3
Salfit	1.1	Single	23.9	Preparatory	21.3
Jericho	1.0	Married	71.1	Elementary	31.2
Ramallah	8.4	Others	5.0	Secondary	16.6
Jerusalem	7.8	Age	%	Diploma	5.0
Bethlehem	5.3	18-22	18.5	B.A. or more	5.7
Hebron	14.0	23-27	16.4	Place of Residence prior to 1994	%
North Gaza	7.0	28-32	13.6		
Gaza City	13.4	33-37	11.9		
Deir al-Balah	5.4	38-42	9.9	West Bank & Gaza	92.8
Khan Younis	8.0	43-47	7.1	Abroad	7.2
Rafah	3.7	48-52	5.4	Income (NIS)*	%
Occupation	%	> 52	17.3	No Income	6.4
Laborers	13.3			Less than 700	26.4
Craftsman	5.3	Occupation	%	701-1000	20.8
Housewives	42.4	Professional	0.5	1001-1700	18.8
Unemployed	13.9	Employees	8.8	1701-2500	15.2
Merchants	3.6	Retired	1.1	2501-3000	6.0
Students	8.9	Farmers	2.2	More than 3000	6.5