

# Center for Palestine Research & Studies (CPRS)

## Palestinian Public Opinion Poll No (31)

22-30 December 1997

### Evaluation of the Performance of PLC and other PNA Institutions, Attitudes Regarding Proposed Legislation, and Political Affiliation

These are the results of opinion poll #31, conducted by the Center for Palestine Research & Studies, between 22-30 December 1997. The poll deals with evaluation of the performance of PLC and other PNA institutions, attitudes regarding proposed legislation, and political affiliation.

The total sample size of this poll is 1320 from Palestinians 18 years and older, of which 831 in the West Bank and 489 in the Gaza Strip. The margin of error is  $\pm 3\%$  and the non-response rate is 3%.

### Main Results

#### 1. Evaluation of the Performance of the PLC and the PNA

- The findings show a rise in the level of positive (very good and good) evaluation of the PLC performance from 42% in September 1997 to 51% in December 1997. A limited rise in the positive evaluation of the performance of the government, the judicial authority, security and police force has also taken place from 56%, 49%, and 68%, to 61%, 53%, and 72% respectively). A slight decrease in the positive evaluation of the Presidency from 73% to 71% has taken place during the same period.
- Positive evaluation of the performance of the PLC is specially high among women, those with primary education, housewives, those with limited income of less than JD300 monthly, and supporters of Fateh. It is significantly lower among men, those with BA degrees, professionals, those with high income of more than JD900 per month, and supporters of Hamas and the PFLP. See table (1) below.

**Table (1)**  
**Positive Evaluation of the Performance of the PLC**

<b>Gender</b>	Women	60%	Men	40%
<b>Education</b>	Primary	60%	BA degrees	41%
<b>Profession</b>	Housewives	59%	Professionals	25%
<b>Income</b>	Low	52%	High	35%
<b>Political affiliation</b>	Fateh Supporters	64%	PFLP Supporters	29%

- Evaluation of the performance of the representatives of each electoral district show a high level of positive evaluation for the performance of the district representatives of Salfit, Jenin, Ramallah, Nablus, Jericho, and Gaza City, and a lower level of positive evaluations for the district representatives of Tulkarm, Deir al-Balah and Jerusalem. See table (2) below.

**Table (2)**

**Positive Evaluation of the Performance of the Representatives of the Electoral Districts \***

1	Jenin	62%	9	Jericho	54%
2	Toubas	45%	10	Bethlehem	45%
3	Tulkarm	32%	11	Hebron	46%
4	Qalqilya	47%	12	Jabalia	49%
5	Salfit	76%	13	Gaza City	55%
6	Nablus	58%	14	Khanyounis	50%
7	Ramallah	59%	15	Deir al-Balah	37%
8	Jerusalem	43%	16	Rafah	46%

\* Margin of error for the electoral districts is higher than the margin for the whole sample

- Positive evaluation of the performance of the Presidency rises in the Gaza Strip, especially in Rafah, and in the Nablus area in the West Bank, and among women, illiterates, housewives, those with low income, and supporters of Fateh. Positive evaluation of the Presidency drops in the West Bank, especially in the area of Tulkarm and in Gaza City the Gaza Strip, and among men, those with BA degrees, the professionals, low income people, and supporters of the PFLP. See table (3) below.

**Table (3)**

**Positive Evaluation of the Performance of the Presidency**

<b>Region</b>	<b>West Bank</b>	69%	<b>Gaza Strip</b>	75%
<b>West Bank</b>	<b>Tulkarm area</b>	52%	<b>Nablus area</b>	83%
<b>Gaza Strip</b>	<b>Gaza City</b>	69%	<b>Rafah</b>	83%
<b>Gender</b>	<b>Men</b>	65%	<b>Women</b>	76%
<b>Education</b>	<b>BA degrees</b>	43%	<b>Illiterates</b>	77%
<b>Profession</b>	<b>Professionals</b>	31%	<b>Housewives</b>	78%
<b>Income</b>	<b>High</b>	35%	<b>Low</b>	73%

<b>Political Affiliation</b>	<b>PFLP Supporters</b>	42%	<b>Fateh Supporters</b>	85%
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- The findings indicate that the evaluation of the performance of the government depends on the area of government function under discussion. Positive evaluation is high in regard to education, providing security, and health, and is relatively low in regard to insuring democracy and human rights and the economy. See table (4) below.

**Table (4)**  
**Positive Evaluation of the Performance**  
**of the Government in Various Areas**

<b>Providing Security</b>	69%
<b>Education</b>	70%
<b>Health</b>	63%
<b>Economy</b>	28%
<b>Democracy and Human Rights</b>	41%

- As table (5) below, and figure (1) indicate, only minor changes have taken place on the levels of positive evaluation of the various PNA institutions during the period between September 1996 and December 1997, except for the increase in the positive evaluation of the police and security forces in the aftermath of the September 1996 Israeli-Palestinian confrontation in which Palestinian security forces fought alongside civilian demonstrators against the Israeli army.

**Table (5)**  
**Positive Evaluation of the Performance of PNA Institutions**  
**(Sept. 1996-Dec. 1997)**

	<b>Dec. 1997</b>	<b>Sept. 1997</b>	<b>June 1997</b>	<b>April 1997</b>	<b>Dec. 1996</b>	<b>Sept. 1996</b>
<b>PLC</b>	51%	42%	46%	48%	50%	48%
<b>Cabinet</b>	61%	56%	53%	59%	63%	63%
<b>Judicial Authority</b>	53%	49%	51%	55%	-----	50%
<b>Police and Security</b>	72%	68%	69%	77%	72%	62%
<b>Presidency</b>	71%	73%	68%	79%	76%	72%

[figure (1)] :Positive Evaluation of the Performance of the PNA Institutions (Sept. 1996-Dec. 1997)

## Attitudes Regarding Proposed Legislation:

- Half of the Palestinians (50%) supports the position of the PLC calling for the immediate issuing of the Basic Law, while a little over a third (35%) supports the position of the Presidency calling for the postponement of the promulgation of the law. Support for the PLC position increases in Gaza City, and among men, those with BA degrees, students, and supporters of the PFLP, while support for the position of the Presidency increases in Rafah and among supporters of Fateh. See table (6) below.

**Table (6)**  
**Position Regarding the Promulgation of the Basic Law**

		Support PLC Position	Support Position of the Presidency
<b>Area</b>	Rafah	37%	54%
	Gaza City	66%	22%
	Nablus	48%	37%
	Hebron	53%	32%
<b>Gender</b>	Men	56%	32%
	Women	44%	38%
<b>Education</b>	Illiterates	40%	34%
	BA Holders	58%	28%
<b>Profession</b>	Students	57%	32%
	Housewives	44%	38%
<b>Income</b>	Low	49%	37%
	High	40%	28%
<b>Political Affiliation</b>	Fateh Supporters	48%	41%
	PFLP Supporters	64%	29%
	Hamas Supporters	49%	40%

- Regarding the proposed political parties' and NGOs' laws, the findings show a large majority of respondents (about three quarters) supporting the view that demands a prior permission form the PNA before political parties or NGOs can be established by individuals or groups. About one fifth of the respondents thought that there was no such need. No significant differences were

found among the different demographic groups except an increase in the percentage of those supporting the permission requirement among those with low income (76%) compared to those with high income (60%), and supporters of Fateh (87%) compared to supporters of Hamas (69%) and the PFLP (49%).

- An overwhelming majority of 87% supports the imposition of compulsory national service, while only 13% oppose it. No significant differences were found among the different demographic groups.
- A large majority of 73% supports the proposed imposition of a JD10 on each individual Palestinian annually to finance university education in Palestine, thus allowing the universities to keep tuition low. Twenty-six percent oppose the proposal. The level of opposition to the proposal was mostly related to level of income. Opposition in the Gaza Strip was higher (34%) than in the West Bank (21%), in the refugee camps (39%) than in cities (28%), and among men (30%) than women (23%), married (29) vs. non-married (17%), and those with low income (31%) vs. those with high income (8%). See table (7) below.

**Table (7)**  
**Level of Opposition to the Imposition of a JD 10 Fee**  
**to Finance Higher Education**

<b>Area</b>	Gaza Strip	34%	West Bank	21%
<b>Residence</b>	Refugee Camps	39%	Cities	28%
<b>Gender</b>	Men	30%	Women	23%
<b>Profession</b>	Merchants	42%	Students	15%
<b>Marital Status</b>	Married	29%	Single	17%
<b>Income</b>	Low	31%	High	8%

- A similar majority of 73% supported the view that local municipal authorities may expropriate parts of privately owned land for the purpose of widening streets and roads. Twenty five percent opposed this view. The level of opposition is higher in the Gaza Strip (34%) than in the West Bank (20%), in refugee camps (42%) than in cities (28%) and villages and towns (16%).

### **Political Affiliation**

- The findings show an increase in the level of support for Islamists, especially Hamas, in December 1997 compared to September 1997. A slight increase in the level of support for Fateh has also taken place during the same period (from 37% to 39%). As a result a decrease occurred in the percentage of independents and non-affiliated from 45% in September to 38% in December 1997. See table (8) and figure (2).

**Table (8)**  
**Political Affiliation (September 1996-December 1997)**

	<b>Dec. 1997</b>	<b>Sept. 1997</b>	<b>June 1997</b>	<b>April 1997</b>	<b>Dec. 1996</b>	<b>Sept. 1996</b>
<b>Fateh</b>	39%	37%	41%	41%	45%	44%
<b>Islamists</b>	18%	14%	13%	15%	15%	15%
<b>National Opposition</b>	5%	4%	4%	6%	4%	5%
<b>Independents and non-affiliated</b>	38%	45%	42%	38%	36%	36%

[Figure (2)]: Political Affiliation (9/96-12/97)

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	Total %	West Bank %	GazaStrip%
<b>Unemployment</b>	<b>38.0</b>	<b>33.0</b>	<b>46.0</b>
<b>1. How often do you follow the news?</b>			
1) Always	27.4	29.0	24.7
2) Often	14.0	13.6	14.7
3) Sometimes	49.8	48.7	51.5
4) Not Sure	8.8	8.7	9.1
<b>2. Generally, how do you evaluate the performance of the PLC?</b>			
1) Very Good	12.8	12.3	13.6
2) Good	38.5	39.5	36.8
3) Fair	22.6	23.1	21.7
4) Bad	9.4	9.8	8.8
5) Very Bad	6.0	4.4	8.8
6) Don't Know/ No Opinion	10.7	10.8	10.4
<b>3. Generally, how do you evaluate the performance of your district representative in the PLC ?</b>			
1) Very Good	13.5	13.2	13.9
2) Good	36.7	37.7	34.9
3) Fair	21.0	19.8	22.9
4) Bad	11.0	11.2	10.7
5) Very Bad	6.9	6.0	8.3
6) Don't Know/ No Opinion	10.9	12.0	9.1
<b>4. Generally, how do you evaluate the performance of the Palestinian government (the Cabinet)?</b>			
1) Very Good	21.0	18.7	24.9

2) Good	39.5	38.4	41.3
3) Fair	19.6	20.0	19.0
4) Bad	8.6	9.7	6.9
5) Very Bad	4.8	5.3	4.1
6) No Opinion/ Do not know	6.5	8.0	3.8
	<b>Total%</b>	<b>West Bank %</b>	<b>GazaStrip%</b>

**5. How do you evaluate the performance of the government in the following areas:**

**5-1 Education**

1) Very Good	30.0	27.9	33.5
2) Good	40.4	40.9	39.7
3) Fair	16.2	14.4	19.3
4) Bad	7.2	9.3	3.5
5) Very Bad	1.8	2.3	1.0
6) Don't Know/ No Opinion	4.4	5.3	3.0

**5-2 Health**

1) Very Good	20.6	18.1	24.9
2) Good	41.7	37.8	48.2
3) Fair	18.8	20.3	16.3
4) Bad	9.8	11.9	6.1
5) Very Bad	4.0	4.6	2.9
6) Don't Know/ No Opinion	5.2	7.2	1.8

**5-3 Economy**

1) Very Good	5.0	5.0	4.9
2) Good	23.4	22.8	24.4
3) Fair	25.4	24.2	27.3



4) Bad	26.8	27.6	25.4
5) Very Bad	14.5	14.0	15.5
6) Don't Know/ No Opinion	5.0	6.4	2.6

**5-4 Democracy & Human Rights**

1) Very Good	10.8	10.5	11.2
2) Good	30.1	30.2	29.8
3) Fair	22.2	19.9	26.2
4) Bad	17.7	17.7	17.9
5) Very Bad	9.4	9.7	8.9
6) Don't Know/ No Opinion	9.8	12.0	6.1

**5-5 Security of Citizens**

1) Very Good	25.2	20.3	33.5
2) Good	43.6	42.8	45.0
3) Fair	13.8	14.0	13.4
4) Bad	9.4	12.4	4.3
5) Very Bad	4.3	5.4	2.4
6) Don't Know/ No Opinion	3.8	5.2	1.4

**Total %                      West Bank %                      GazaStrip%**

**6. Generally, how do you evaluate the performance of the judicial authority and courts?**

1) Very Good	17.3	15.9	19.6
2) Good	35.4	35.4	35.2
3) Fair	18.4	14.9	24.2
4) Bad	8.5	9.0	7.8
5) Very Bad	4.1	4.7	3.0
6) Don't Know/ No Opinion	16.3	20.0	10.0

**7. Generally, how do you evaluate the performance of the Palestinian police and security services?**

1) Very Good	26.8	23.8	32.1
2) Good	45.2	46.6	42.9
3) Fair	15.5	15.5	15.5
4) Bad	6.1	6.2	6.1
5) Very Bad	2.5	3.1	1.6
6) Don't Know/ No Opinion	3.8	4.9	1.9

**8. Generally, how do you evaluate the performance of the institution of the Presidency?**

1) Very Good	34.6	30.2	42.1
2) Good	36.6	38.5	33.3
3) Fair	12.3	12.1	12.6
4) Bad	6.1	7.0	4.6
5) Very Bad	2.6	3.1	1.8
6) Don't Know/ No Opinion	7.8	9.1	5.6

**9) A while ago, the PLC has approved the draft of the Basic Law of the PA, which is comparable to a temporary constitution for the Palestinians, but the office of the presidency refuses to sign it into a law. Whose position do you support?**

1) I support the position of the PLC regarding the necessity of issuing the law	49.5	47.8	52.3
2) I support the position of the office of the presidency in delaying the issuance of the law	35.4	35.7	34.9
3) Others (specify -----)	3.5	5.0	1.0
4) Do Not Know/No opinion	11.7	11.6	11.8

	<b>Total %</b>	<b>West Bank %</b>	<b>GazaStrip%</b>
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**10) There are different Palestinian views regarding the proposed political parties' law, which is being discussed now by the PLC. Some think that people should have the right to form parties without prior permission from the Palestinian Authority, while others think that the formation of parties should require such prior permission. What do you think?**

1) No need for prior permission from the PA	18.4	20.0	15.6
2) Prior permission by the PA should be a requirement	74.2	70.9	79.7
3) Others (specify -----)	2.0	2.3	1.4
4) Do Not Know/No opinion	5.4	6.8	3.2

**11) There are different Palestinian views regarding the proposed NGOs' law, which is being discussed now by the PLC. Some think that people should have the right to form NGOs without prior permission from the Palestinian Authority, while others think that the formation of NGOs should require such prior permission. What do you think?**

1) No need for prior permission from the PA	22.1	23.6	19.5
2) Prior permission by the PA should be a requirement	73.3	71.6	76.1
3) Others (specify -----)	0.9	0.8	1.1
4) Do Not Know/No opinion	3.7	4.0	3.3

**12) The following is a list of proposals; we would like you to tell us if you support or oppose each of them:**

**1) The imposition by the PA of a national service of one year for those 18 years and above to do public service in various areas such as land reclamation, crop harvesting, education, health, civil defense and sentry, etc.**

1) Support	86.5	88.0	84.1
2) Oppose	12.5	10.9	15.2
4) Do Not Know/No opinion	1.0	1.1	0.8

**Total %                      West Bank %                      Gaza Strip%**

**2) The appropriation of part of your land by the PA for the purpose of building and widening streets**

1) Support	73.3	78.8	64.0
2) Oppose	24.8	19.6	33.7
4) Do Not Know/No opinion	1.9	1.6	2.4

**3) The imposition of a JD 10 fee per person annually to subsidize university education in Palestine and maintain low university tuition**

1) Support	72.6	77.5	64.4
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2) Oppose	25.7	20.6	34.3
4) Do Not Know/No opinion	1.7	1.9	1.3

**13) Which of the following political trends do you support?**

1) PPP	1.4	1.3	1.6
2) PFLP	3.5	3.1	4.2
3) Fateh	38.5	35.6	43.4
4) Hamas	11.6	11.7	11.5
5) DFLP	1.2	1.7	0.3
6) Islamic Jihad	2.6	2.8	2.2
7) Fida	0.3	0.2	0.5
8) Independent Islamists	4.2	6.0	1.1
9) Independent Nationalists	6.3	8.2	3.0
10) None of the above	28.2	26.4	31.2
11) Others	2.2	2.9	1.0